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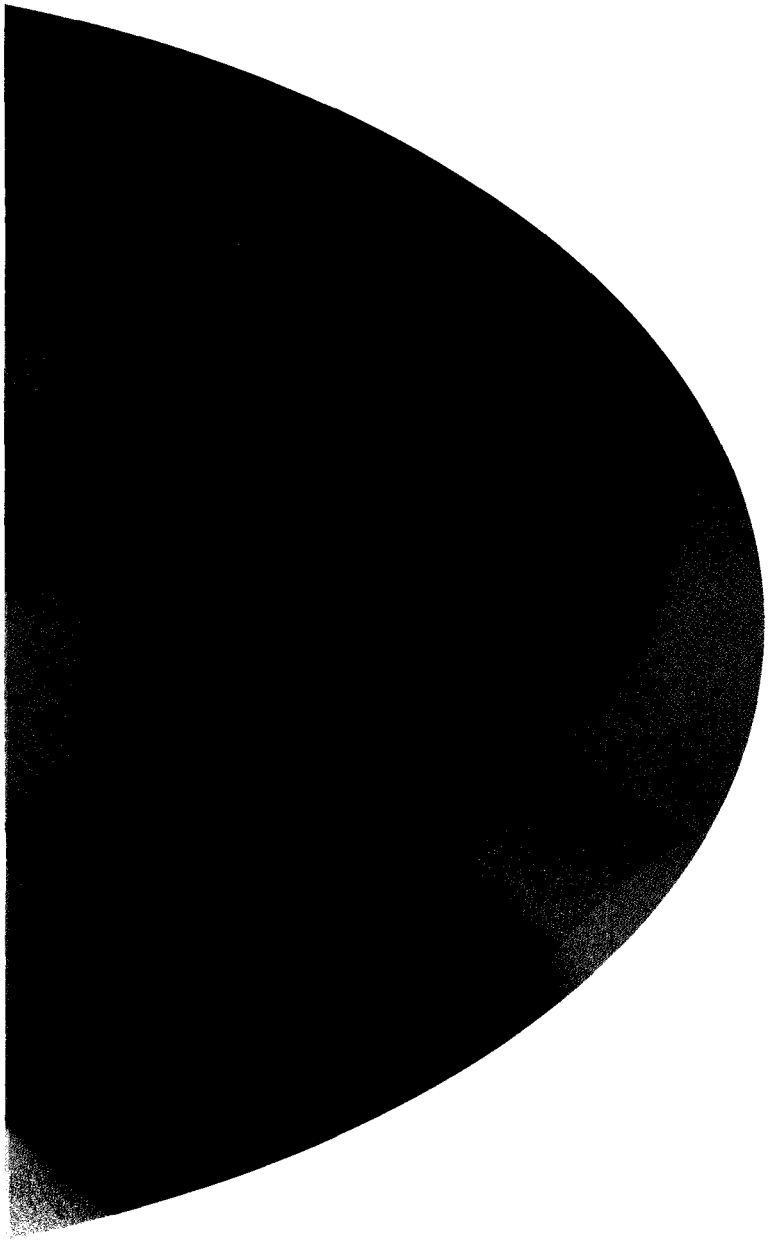

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Advertising Manager Todd Westover
Account Executive Elizabeth Capano
Detroit Rep. Joseph J. Colucci 248-626-9918

PUBLISHER
Edward A. Capano

■ LETTERS ■

WHOSE CENTURY?

I am dismayed by NATIONAL REVIEW's editorial "The Liberal Millennium" (Jan. 24). Your observation, "Conservatives can draw up counter-lists, but that suggests a retreat-to-the-wilderness strategy that is ultimately self-defeating," is revolting. According to NR, it is kooky for conservatives to even conspicuously dissent from collectivist-liberal and secular-humanist verdicts about the lessons of the 20th century. It's okay for the liberal cultural monopoly to build nauseating, lavish pantheons for subversives, demagogues, traitors, despots, and mass murderers, but if we disseminate the truth regarding the genuine heroes of our time, we're just being spoilsports who are underscoring how pathetically out of touch we are.

What is particularly disappointing—and self-defeating—is the obsession with being in the mainstream (as defined, of course, by the liberal cultural elite) that has gradually taken root at NATIONAL REVIEW since the early 1980s. If proponents of truth do not have the courage to proclaim it, then lies automatically win. Edmund Burke knew this, the American Founding Fathers knew this, and so did the founding editors of NR.

William A. Bowie Jr.
Lexington, Ky.

THE ESSENCE OF MAN

Doesn't Charles Murray's essay on human nature ("Deeper into the Brain," Jan. 24) go too far? His entire argument seems to be based on the assumption that man is merely a biological creature, a biochemical organism. Think of it! Genes or "a combination of genes and their alleles" are discovered that produce faith in God. Genetics are then responsible for unbelief (and, for some Christians, damnation)! If genetics differentiates the "observant Christians from lapsed ones," why not also Christians from atheists? If such a discovery were made, how could even those most hard-wired to believe take faith in God seriously? And think of the implications for personal responsibility! Would not free will and moral absolutes fade into obsolescence? "So what?" indeed!

Oscar Miles
Florence, Ala.

BACK TO BASICS

Paul Johnson ("Toward Recovery," Jan. 24) argues that there is a difference between writing and the other arts because, unlike the other arts, people know how to read and write and therefore "the book is not a mystery." Do people really know how to write?

There are two lessons to draw from Johnson's observations about art and how writing is taught in our schools. First, as Johnson points out, the studio system stressed skill and discipline. Masters were not instant masters, they first learned their craft. Similarly, without grammar, you cannot write. Today, instead of grammar, students are given journals and invited to write and express themselves. Isn't this the wrong way to go about it? In her famous essay, Dorothy Sayers called grammar one of "the lost tools of learning"—a prerequisite before a student undertakes writing. For example, James Joyce spent years learning how to use the tools of his art, and practicing with those tools, before he undertook *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*.

Second, Sayers's use of the word "lost" and Johnson's example of Gerald Laing's search for the techniques of traditional representational sculpture raise another analogy. Have we lost the tools and techniques of good writing? Can they be revived? I suspect that whole-language instruction, as a theory, is used to hide a secret. Teachers who themselves never learned to draw do not mind a pedagogy that lets students jump right into painting. Paul Johnson believes art can be revived. If we follow Johnson's prescription, the same can be true of writing.

Favor J. Smith
Lake Placid, N.Y.

RIGHT TALK

Jay Nordlinger's article "The Comeback Kid, Indeed" (Feb. 7) is, above all, honest. No decent doctor would tell a patient diagnosed with cancer to just "move on." Neither should America just "move on" from the cancer that is the Clinton administration. Nordlinger apparently believes that honest history matters.

Joel Mark Solliday
West Haven, Conn.

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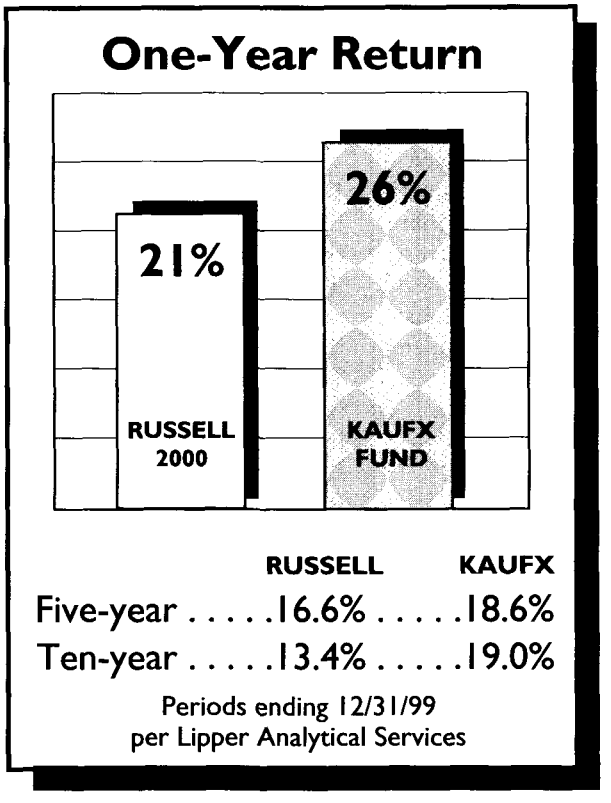
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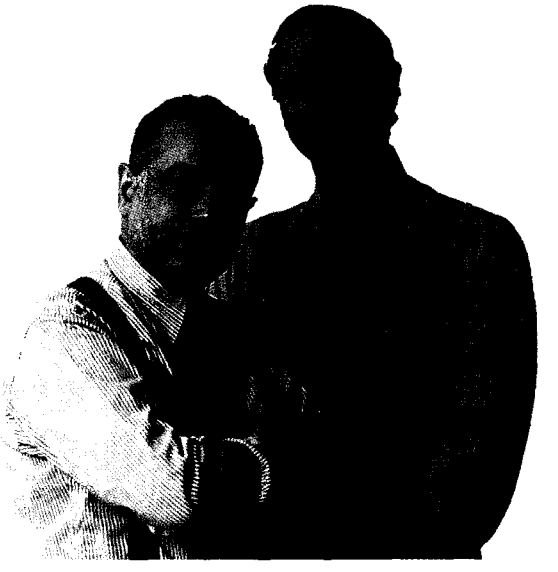

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■ FOR THE RECORD ■

■ President **Clinton** flubs line in State of the Union: "The vice president launched a new effort to make communities more liberal . . . livable—liberal, no." . . . Cato Institute counts 104 new or expanded government regulations or spending programs in 89-minute address. "That's 1.17 initiatives a minute," says press release. . . . National Taxpayers Union tallies $126 billion in new spending. "That breaks down to $1.6 billion in new spending a minute," says statement. . . . *New York Times*: "As Mr. Clinton heads into the eighth and final year of his presidency, he is a blur of motion—but he is also very alone. His only child is away at college. His wife has moved out to start a career of her own. His vice president is on the road seeking to become his successor. Left behind, at least, is **Buddy** the Labrador, who now spends all night with the president when **Hillary Rodham Clinton** is away." . . . In Southeastern Legal Foundation poll, 58 percent of American voters say President Clinton should be disbarred for lying under oath and obstructing justice. . . . Mrs. Clinton, on her husband: "I certainly intend to spend the rest of my life with him."

■ **Al Gore** on Iowa caucuses, in 1988: "an arcane procedure that produces crazy results." He says he has changed his mind. . . . **Michael Whouley**, Gore's Iowa field chief, on eastern Iowa, in *New York Times Magazine*: "Why does this region have so many [expletive] knuckleheads?" . . . **Bill Bradley** to Gore in New Hampshire debate: "Why should we believe you will tell the truth as president if you don't tell the truth as a candidate?" . . . Bradley, in post-debate appearance: "I think Al will have to go a long way to demonstrate that what he said tonight was true and that he has not lied in this campaign." . . . **Fred Wertheimer** of Democracy 21, in *Washington Post*: "Gore's statements about Bradley's record [on campaign finance] in the Senate are not true." . . . In Voter.com poll of Hispanics, 38 percent have unfavorable view of Gore, 42 percent have unfavorable view of **Pat Buchanan**. . . . In *Washington Post*/ABC News poll, Buchanan earns 55 percent unfavorable rating among conservatives, up from 39 percent before leaving GOP.

■ **Bob Kerrey** (D., Neb.) deals Democratic chances for Senate majority in 2000 a blow by announcing retirement. State trending Republican. . . . Campaigning in N.H. for Bradley, Kerrey spots **George W. Bush** in restaurant: "You probably don't want me to say nice things about you. . . . Well, you're the real thing. I trust you." . . . Former secretary of state **Zbigniew Brzezinski** becomes foreign-policy adviser to **John McCain**. . . . **Orrin Hatch, Jack Kemp, John Sununu** endorse Bush. . . . Rep. **Tom Coburn** (R., Okla.) and House impeachment counsel **David Schippers** endorse Keyes. . . .**Trent Lott**, on **Steve Forbes**: "**Alan Keyes** is more qualified to be president than he is." . . . McCain, on whether he'll ever run again for president: "I would never do this again. I'm too tired." So much for President McCain's second term. . . . **Lowell Weicker** endorses Bradley.

"It just makes me feel kind of stupid, being killed by peacekeeping forces."

■ Rep. **Virgil Goode** (Va.) bolts Democrats, joins GOP caucus, and promises to support Speaker **Denny Hastert**, but remains technically unaffiliated with either party. . . . Former University of Nebraska football coach **Tom Osborne** says he will run as Republican for seat of retiring Rep. **Bill Barrett** (R., Neb.). . . . Republican National Committee co-chairwoman **Pat Harrison** travels to Costa Rica, France, Italy, and Japan to persuade expatriate Americans to vote by absentee ballot, believing as many as 80 percent of 6 million citizens living abroad favor GOP, reports *Fortune*. . . . In near-unanimous vote, New Mexico Senate condemns Gov. **Gary Johnson** (R.) for supporting drug legalization. . . . **Ward Connerly** comes out against California initiative banning gay marriage. . . . FCC withdraws rule that would have forced religious broadcasters to buy expensive commercial licenses or to run more secular programming.

■ **Juan Miguel Gonzalez**, father of Elián, on *Nightline* (speaking through a translator): "Sometimes what I would like to do is go down there [to Miami] with a rifle, I don't know to get rid of how many people." . . . Former *New York Times* editor **Max Frankel**, in *Tikkun*: "I have grown certain that humanity invented God." . . . **Walter Cronkite**, in BBC interview: "I think we are realizing that we are going to have to have an international rule of law. We need not only an executive to make international law, but we need the military forces to enforce that law." . . . **Marta Brown** sues Wal-Mart for sex discrimination after store relieved her following first day on job as **Santa Claus**, says tots "don't care if Santa is a man, woman, or donkey." Child's complaint led to dismissal. . . . Brand-new $1 million fire station in Charleston, W.V., cited for fire-code violations.

■ **Fidel Castro** permits deep-water oil exploration by foreign companies in Gulf of Mexico. . . . Pirate attacks in some of world's busiest shipping lanes jump by nearly 40 percent. . . . Vatican says it would never sever ties with Taiwan to improve relations with Beijing. . . . Russia plans Mars space-probe launch in 2005. . . . Ashes of **Adolf Hitler** were tossed in East German river in 1970 under orders of Soviet leader **Leonid Brezhnev**, say documents in Moscow archive.

■ Ex-Rep. **Vin Weber** (R., Minn.), on Clinton's 89-minute State of the Union speech: "I hope they didn't make Elián Gonzalez watch it or he'd think he was back in Cuba." **NR**

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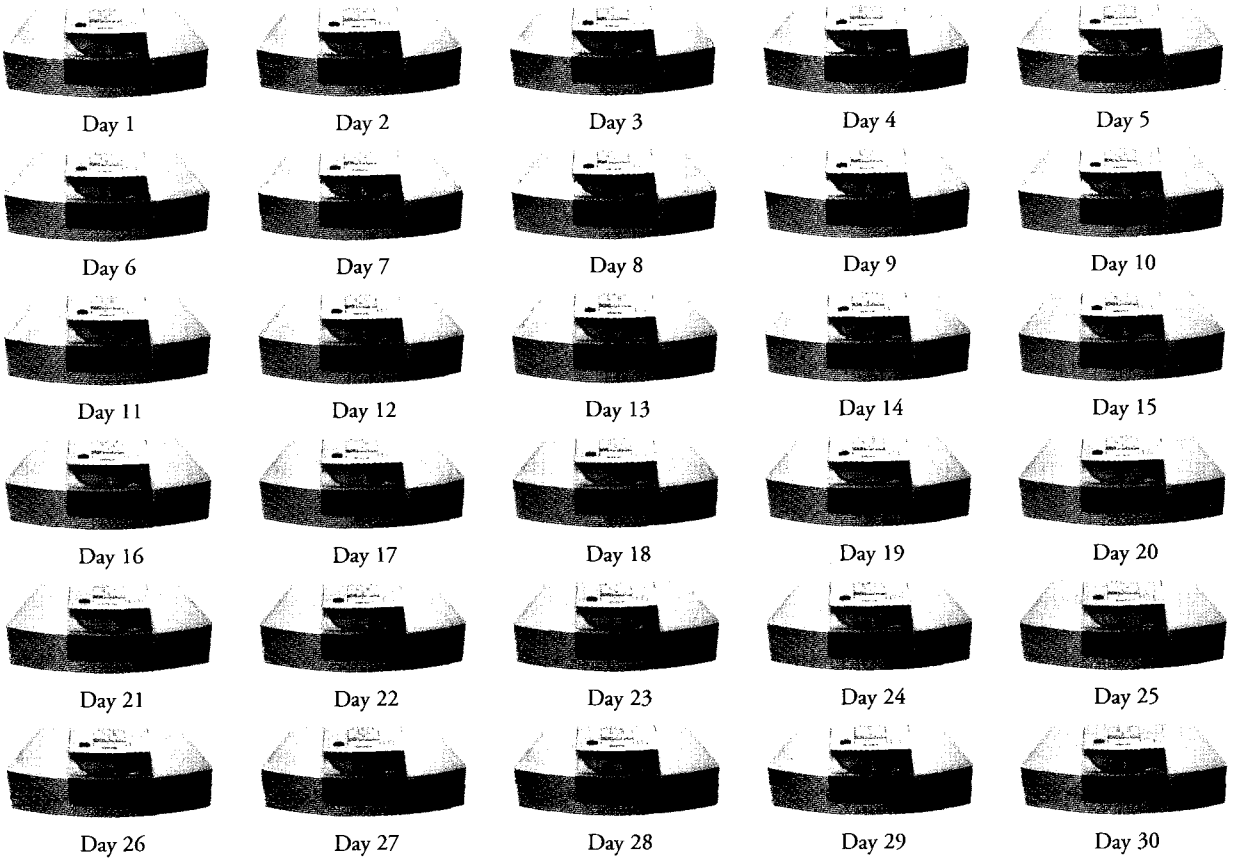

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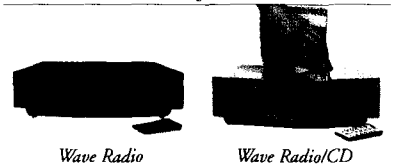

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THE WEEK

■ "The era of big government is over," he lied.

■ Our analysis of the meaning of the New Hampshire primary appears below, the salient question being the need for Sen. McCain to identify himself with embattled conservative policies. At this moment a subsidiary point should be made, however regretfully. It is that it's time for Steve Forbes to pull out. Nobody has fought more valiantly than he to press his insights in the public square. But he has not lit the fires in absence of which he becomes merely a distracting figure on the stage. Even as Gary Bauer and Alan Keyes should withdraw, and may need to do so if only because the bill collectors are hovering by, so should Steve Forbes withdraw, even if his credit continues good. His devotion to his principles is such as to require that he go the further step of withdrawing, lest he diminish his cause by an obtrusive advancement of it in a theater in which attention will be paid only to other players.

■ Does George W. smirk? This is not as light a problem as it seems: Mannerisms can make powerful, and sometimes revealing, first impressions on voters. The governor is at a delicate symbolic moment. He does smirk, with a bantam's cocky clowning. He also grins, with a refreshing lack of pretension. He must find some way to steer the voters' perceptions toward the latter trait. Meanwhile, what do we call Al Gore's frozen-eyed, gaffed-fish look? The Gaze? The Stare? The Death Ray?

■ In his State of the Union address, President Clinton announced that "next month, America will achieve the longest period of economic growth in our entire history." Just six sentences later, he explained that things looked much bleaker in the dark days before Clinton, when "our nation was gripped by economic distress, social decline, political gridlock." But hold on. This boom can set a record for longevity only if it started in 1991—a full year before Clinton ran against "the worst economy in fifty years"—as in fact it did. Oh, well. This president never has been much good at getting his story straight.

■ The Supreme Court upheld both the principle of regulating contributions to individual candidates set forth in *Buckley* v. *Valeo* in 1976, and the specific $1,000 cap (inflation is not a factor, said the justices, who continue to pull down their 1976 salaries—just kidding). The Court was coy about whether it might later approve limits on expenditures (i.e., soft money). On the one hand, the majority opinion didn't actually say the Court would. On the other, there was enough wheel-spinning in the concurring opinions to encourage zealous lawyers to try again. So the Court has its preferred situation: the prospect of endless litigation, with infinite slicing of the legal salami. In his majority opinion, Justice Souter had the cheek to say that "the cynical assumption that large donors call the tune could jeopardize the willingness of voters to take part in democratic governance." A greater stumbling block to voters' willingness, surely, is that, with the courts in overdrive since the 1950s, there is less democratic governance to take part in.

■ Bill Bradley, we have learned, was admitted to Princeton with an SAT verbal score of 485. We knew he was a zealous supporter of affirmative action; we didn't know he was a poster child for it.

■ Hillary Clinton had some emergency political fence-mending to do, after appearing at a Martin Luther King Day rally hosted by the Rev. Al Sharpton, at which a Sharptonesque clergyman held forth on his employment history with Jewish bosses. So she attacked her likely Senate opponent, Rudy Giuliani, for appearing at a banquet with Joerg Haider, leader of the Austrian Freedom Party, who has praised Hitler and the Waffen SS. Clearly these were parallel events, since to Mrs. Clinton racial demagogy in New York City and Austria take place in equally foreign lands.

■ New York City—which is still, after all, New York City—spent nine months recruiting welfare recipients to take jobs as telephone psychics. This was part of its welfare-to-work program. What happened? The press chuckled; *experienced, professional* psychics expressed outrage; the city cancelled the arrangement. Just as we would have foretold.

■ The world's richest man, Microsoft founder Bill Gates, is so incredibly wealthy that it would take Bill Clinton nearly four minutes to squander his entire fortune.

■ When Sen. Jesse Helms addressed the U.N. Security Council, at the invitation of Ambassador and temporary Council President Richard Holbrooke, he told them that the Reagan Doctrine had done more for democracy in the world than the U.N. had. Sen. Joseph Biden jumped to set the record straight, criticizing Helms for "nostalgia" and saying of the Reagan Doctrine, "Thank God it's dead." Any other anti-imperial doctrines whose death Biden wants to thank God for? The Four Freedoms? The Monroe Doctrine? The American Revolution? And they call Helms the peckerwood.

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■ "If once you have paid him the Dane-geld," wrote Kipling in one of his most famous verses, "You never get rid of the Dane." British prime minister Tony Blair is in the process of learning this painful lesson under instruction from the IRA. In the recent past, he has conceded whatever its leaders have wanted: release of more than 200 convicted murderers from prison; the dismantling of the front-line defense force, the Royal Ulster Constabulary; a new governing body for Northern Ireland, including representatives of Sinn Fein/IRA; seats in the Westminster parliament for men who refuse to take the oath of loyalty. No matter how high the IRA has set the Dane-geld, Blair has proved eager to pay. A new era had arrived, he promised, as he saw in the IRA attitude wonderful evidence of a "historic, seismic shift." All the IRA had to do in return was decommission their weapons—not even all their guns and Semtex, either, but just enough to save Blair's face. Disarmament was to begin on February 1. But now, claims the IRA, with the triumphant air of successful cheats and liars, to hand over a single bullet would be surrender. Though Blair's instinct is to appease the terrorists further, there is nothing more in the kitty to offer. A seismic shift can be dangerous.

■ Germans were far from pleased when Helmut Kohl as chancellor ordered them to give up the Deutsche mark, the symbol of their postwar revival. Deprived of an election or a referendum on the issue, they had to accept Kohl's word that they were doing the right thing, as good Europeans. And now they discover that Kohl's word was not to be trusted. Certain details are as yet unknown, but the man had clearly been bought by several dubious characters, to the tune of millions of dollars. Admitting that he took funds illegally, and then laundered them, Kohl refuses as a matter of "honor" to reveal who the donors were, or for what purposes the monies were provided. It appears, though, that the principal godfather was François Mitterrand, striking a deal whereby France would help Kohl to win reelection, and Germany would surrender its currency on terms that suited France. Kohl's Christian Democratic party has collapsed, and it may even implode irrecoverably from the corruption, as equivalent parties elsewhere in Europe have done. A swarm of sycophants is emerging to claim that bribes of this type are quite in order, stemming from "reasons of state" rather than shameless personal advancement. It seems that Kohl may have some years in a prison cell to reflect that a European union and a currency secretly purchased are not worth having, and nothing to do with honor.

■ The European Union announced that if Joerg Haider's Freedom Party entered the Austrian government, it would sever all but the most technical diplomatic contacts with Austria. Haider has a coy way of trolling for Nazi-ish votes. But he has also profited from disgust with the Socialists and the People's party, two haggard, corrupt forces. All over western Europe, establishment parties are reeling from scandal and post–Cold War lack of mission. Kohl's travails in Germany are only the latest example. Italy's political landscape has been remade. Mitterrand's Socialists in France stole fortunes, and harbored literal fascists who happened to be Mitterrand's chums. Belgium's political insiders protected a pedophile mass-murderer. Finally, Haider and other loose-cannon outsiders have a wedge issue: runaway immigration. Because the mainstream right-of-center parties will not address it in any responsible way, it is falling to turbulent spirits. The EU's efforts to make denial the policy of a bumptious superstate will only make the problem worse.

■ Western democracy is not for Russia, the bright young president Vladimir Putin says. People may be destitute all over the country, but he has authorized a 57 percent increase in military spending. On the anniversary of Lenin's creation of the secret police, he praised the work it did right down to his own days in the KGB. In case anybody is still off-message, he has just concluded a power-sharing arrangement with the Communist party in the newly elected parliament. Together, Putin's Unity party and the Communists have an assured working majority. The speaker is a Communist, and the standing committees have been packed with Communists. As in proper one-party states, the executive and legislative have come together, a process for which there is a smooth euphemism: "consolidating power." Putin likes to repeat that Soviet dictatorship is a thing of the past. Awarding himself all sorts of democratic credentials, he just happens to have sidelined all the democrats in the parliament, and is leaning on their friends in the media. The skills he displays in the use of old-style methods count for a great deal more than his daily protestations of good will.

■ Sam Tanenhaus, the *Vanity Fair* writer who is author of a biography of Whittaker Chambers, and working on a biography of William F. Buckley Jr., took a look at a third NR editor in an article for *New York Press*. "James Burnham . . . wrote a column for NATIONAL REVIEW in which he fantasized, always in the rhetoric of high logic, about World War III. It was pure . . . bunk. But it was taken very seriously. No one thought to ask Burnham whether he was ready to abandon his comfortable digs in Connecticut for the jungles of Korea or Vietnam." Burnham did not "fantasize" about World War III; he observed that we were in it (it was more commonly called the Cold War). He was not taken seriously *enough*, having been exiled from polite circles for attacking containment from the right in the early Fifties. It is true that no one asked him to fight in the Korean or Vietnam War; being born in 1905 made him an unlikely draft pick. Perhaps when Daniel Kelly's first-rate biography of James Burnham finds a publisher, someone will send a copy to Tanenhaus's comfortable digs at Condé Nast.

■ *Salon* ran a piece by Dan Savage, a gay sex columnist, who infiltrated Gary Bauer's Iowa campaign and tried to give him his bad case of the flu by licking office doorknobs and handing him a chewed pen. This is what is known as displacement.

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For 20 years, gay men have been giving themselves a disease a lot worse than the flu by the promiscuous intermingling of tongues and other things. One gay wretch split off his self-hatred and projected it onto Bauer. Typical of the gay subculture; typical of *Salon*.

■ The Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation, which administers Monticello, announced that there was a "strong likelihood" that Jefferson fathered at least one, and perhaps all, of Sally Hemings's children. The decision tracks DNA tests of Jefferson and Hemings descendants whose results were released in 1998. More important than the intimate record is the outside story: Jefferson's evasions and despair on the slavery question in the last 30 years of his life (Washington and Franklin freed all their slaves; Jefferson freed only the Hemingses). But more important than that sad endgame are the words of the Declaration of Independence, Jefferson's rebuke to Jefferson's practice. "All honor," as Lincoln wrote, "to the man who . . . had the coolness, forecast, and capacity to introduce into a merely revolutionary document, an abstract truth, applicable to all men and all times . . ."

■ In a promotion, the Zimbabwe Banking Corporation held a drawing among its account holders for a prize of $3,000. Drumroll, please. And the lucky winner is—Zimbabwe president Robert Mugabe.

■ For almost 30 years, Craig Claiborne was chief food writer of the *New York Times*, and his influence was savory indeed. Along with Julia Child and a couple of others, he showed America a horizon beyond pot roast and potatoes, and did so in marvelous style. He died last month, having come a long way from his native Mississippi Delta. This was a rich and significant life.

■ Mrs. MacArthur used to attend all the right-wing anti-Communist celebrations, beginning just after the General (it was always "the General" from her lips) died in 1964. She was small and thin and gorgeous-turned-pretty in her late sixties. In manner she was soft of speech, courtly, and generous in her brief comments to visiting dignitaries. In the '80s she would arrive in a wheelchair, accompanied by an aide; and, always, the little genteel reminiscences about the General, and the sweet southern smile, and the early leavetaking, back to—back to the suite, the General's suite, at the Waldorf-Astoria. When President Truman dismissed MacArthur in 1951, the returning commander of the U.N. forces in Korea was greeted with a frenzied adulation. He had not been back in America, not since commanding the Pacific war, and serving as emperor of the defeated Japan, which he had brought out of its humiliated shambles into democratic prosperity. The then-owner of the Waldorf-Astoria, a widow, exuberantly advised the General and Mrs. MacArthur that they could have their spacious suite at cost—"for as long as you want it." In late January, Jean MacArthur died, 48 years after first availing herself of the Waldorf's hospitality. She was a lovely lady, and is reunited, at last, with the General.

—WFB

CAMPAIGN 2000

The Race Begins

JOHN MCCAIN won a broad, deep victory in New Hampshire. He racked up sizable pluralities among men and women, among young and old, among the religious and the irreligious. His win is best understood in personal, rather than ideological, terms. Mischievous commentators will rush to say that Republicans have, by supporting McCain, rejected tax cuts and the campaign-finance system. But the exit polls suggest that public-policy issues played only a marginal role in either the Republican or the Democratic race. Among those Republicans most concerned about taxes, 65 percent actually voted for the bold tax-cutters, George W. Bush and Steve Forbes. Fewer Republicans listed campaign finance as an important issue than listed world affairs, a traditional snooze.

McCain appeals to voters because of his character, not his positions. He is seen as someone who is willing to stand up for his beliefs—the same judgment that fueled Pat Buchanan's New Hampshire win in 1996—and who has strong values. He is seen as a fighter, as Bush and Forbes are not. In addition, McCain artfully fuses voters' patriotic sentiments with their disgust at Clinton. In an issue-free environment, these strengths may be enough to propel McCain to the nomination.

If, that is, he heeds the warnings hidden beneath the New Hampshire results. McCain's appeal to independents is matched by weakness among Republican core voters, who gave Bush a narrow margin. McCain fared much worse among conservatives than among liberals and moderates. Moreover, a majority of his backers express reservations about him. These results spell trouble for McCain in primaries where independents cannot vote (they were 42 percent of the voters in New Hampshire) and in, if he were the nominee, the November elections.

It would not be difficult for McCain to stop this hemorrhaging. In this campaign, he has gone out of his way to irritate conservatives—not just by constantly promoting campaign-finance regulations and trashing tax cuts, but, more important, by omission. McCain has no conservative issue of his own. Few Republicans would have more credibility than McCain in promoting missile defense or opposing women in combat. Repealing racial preferences would dovetail nicely with his emphasis on the bonds of patriotism; an attack on overweening judges would fit with his theme of restoring self-government. But so far, nothing of this sort has been heard from him. It is not too late for him to speak up.

If McCain does not take the lead on some conservative cause, he will leave an opening for a Bush comeback. Bush,

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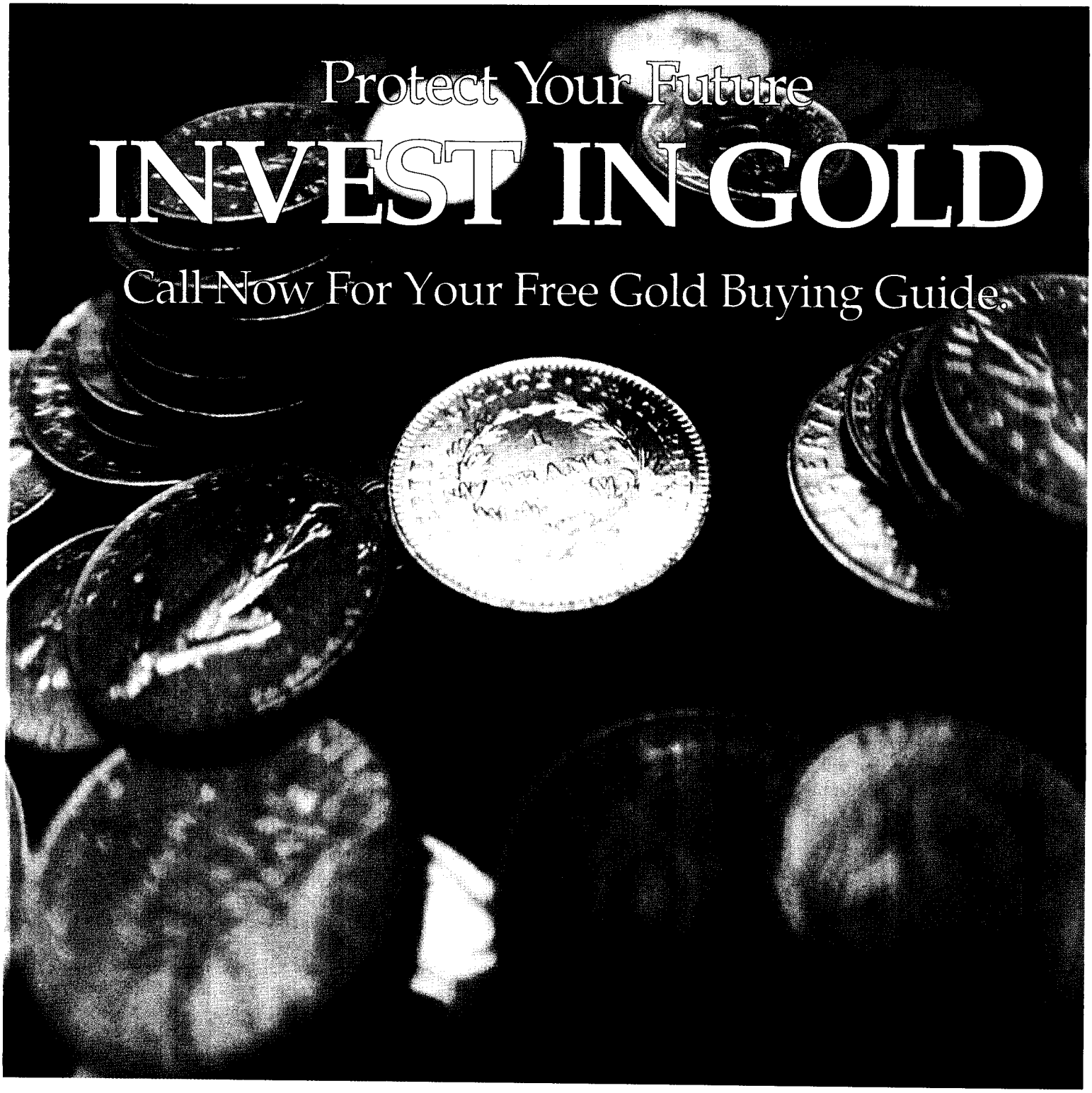

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for his part, would have to demonstrate some of McCain's willingness to fight. The Texas governor has seemed remarkably cavalier about the race: not watching the Democratic debates, keeping a light schedule in the closing days of the New Hampshire campaign, complaining about the disruption of his domestic routine. Bush's television ads on taxes were defensive, emphasizing that he would, like McCain, save money for Social Security and debt reduction, rather than emphasizing his approach over McCain's. Bush was coasting on his name, his money, his endorsements from party notables, and, above all, his inevitability.

Now that the aura of inevitability has been stripped from him, Bush can no longer run for the nomination as though he were a general-election candidate. His message of compassionate conservatism, especially in the face of McCain's sharp challenge, seems a collection of small-bore policies and maudlin platitudes about "touching hearts." Luckily, his platform contains the elements of a more bracing campaign theme. His support for tax cuts, school choice, free-market reform of Social Security, and tort reform should give him a claim to being a reformist outsider—one willing to take on special interests, such as lawyers and teachers' unions, that McCain doesn't touch.

Republican strategists are nervous about the possibility that the GOP primary race could drag on longer than the Democratic one. But neither leading Republican runs the risk of emerging from the race looking untrustworthy, as Al Gore does—perhaps because neither is untrustworthy, as Al Gore is. The question still to be settled is which man is best equipped to fight against him for the conservative cause.

Together Again

There sat Al above bad Bill.
On a good day, Bill can still
Charm the viewers (something Al,
Who comes on like root canal,
Desperately needs); while Bill,
With a legacy to fill,
Touted Al as sinners do
Still damp from the foggy dew.

—W. H. von Dreele

GOVERNMENT

State of Confusion

In his final State of the Union address, President Clinton proposed adding $126 billion to the budget (this according to the National Taxpayers Union). In an 89-minute speech, that works out to more than $1.6 billion per minute. Clinton was spending money at a faster clip than the government can print it—literally: The Bureau of Engraving says it can print only $1 billion a minute. Clinton clearly believes that the burgeoning surplus allows him to resurrect every spending proposal that got shot down in 1993.

So furiously was Clinton spending money that he had no time to impose logical or rhetorical order on his speech. He served up this gem toward the end of the ordeal: "Modern science has confirmed what ancient faiths have always taught: The most important fact of life is our common humanity. Therefore, we should do more than just tolerate our diversity—we should honor it and celebrate it." "Therefore"? Truly, Clinton's speech was an army of clichés in search of a subsidy.

The initial Republican response was weak. Senators Susan Collins and Bill Frist were more intent on appearing inoffensive than on making the case for a conservative agenda. Collins even bragged that last year, "Republicans boosted education spending by 500 million dollars more than the president's budget, and we added funds for children with special needs." Republicans never get credit for that kind of one-upmanship, nor should they. House Speaker Denny Hastert kept talking about finding compromises with the president and explaining that "the devil's in the details."

By all means, Republicans should cooperate with the president when possible: on admitting China to the World Trade Organization; on enacting tax credits to help individuals purchase health care; and on establishing tax-advantaged Individual Development Accounts to finance health, education, and retirement expenses. On this last point in particular, Republicans have not shown much strategic imagination.

Neither has the Republican opposition done its job when Clinton is able to adopt its signature issues. Eliminating the national debt and reducing the marriage penalty were supposed to top the congressional agenda for the year. Clinton, unlike the Republicans, understands that debt reduction will not be a practical or political bar to all the new spending he wants. His marriage-penalty proposal, meanwhile, unfairly penalizes mothers who stay at home—just as George W. Bush's does.

Pace Speaker Hastert, the devil's in the direction Clinton wants to go. For too long, Republicans have shrunk from the task of making the case against his bad, though popular, ideas. It is past time to explain that putting still more students in remedial college classes is no substitute for fixing America's high schools, and that shrinking class sizes and connecting kids to the Internet will not do it either. Republicans should refuse to expand Head Start funding until the program shows some results. They should pound Clinton for proposing tax hikes on corporations (a proposal that Bill Bradley and John McCain have both picked up). They should point out that no matter how Draconian our child-support enforcement policies get, they will never compensate for the absence of fathers from their children's homes. That guns are routinely used for self-defense. That

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Newsweek

"All [Clinton] did was paddle his surfboard out to the coming wave of the business cycle." (National Review Online)

NEW YORK POST

"Was Gen. Shelton simply AWOL when the president made his defense request?" asked National Review Online in its daily Washington Bulletin.

The Hotline

Nationalreview.com's Kudlow writes that Steve Forbes's latest "anti-Bush ad" is "causing him problems, not just in the debates, but among the very core of his political base . . . "

The New York Times

National Review, online, . . . [has] run exhaustive accounts of the events . . .

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the notion that women get only 75 cents to a man's dollar is a myth.

Yet saying the right things about each issue will not be enough. What Clinton has done is to throw out so many issues that there are effectively none; to vitiate politics as an act of deliberation and choice. The reinvigoration of American politics will require a conservative agenda rooted in contemporary circumstances. These circumstances include an inadequate defense, and an administration that, judging from Clinton's speech, views the maintenance of the obsolete ABM Treaty and the creation of an anti-missile defense as equally important priorities; an illegitimacy rate that threatens republican institutions; a judiciary that has usurped too much power; widespread abortion; runaway middle-class entitlements; a tax burden that is far too high; and much more besides. The Republican party should, in short, treat its moral obligations more seriously than the advice of its anxious pollsters. The point, to paraphrase Ronald Reagan, is not to defeat Clintonism but to transcend it.

ELIAN GONZALEZ

Lost at Sea

THE soul of socialism, red or national, has ever been attracted to crowds and campaigns: the hortatory slogans; the bused "spontaneous" demonstrators; the maximum leader, stepping from the control room to publicly direct the cheers that he has manufactured. In the case of Elián Gonzalez, the socialist stage machinery has a 6-year-old to play with.

The latest scene of the production involved the trip of Elián's grandmothers, Raquel Rodriguez and Mariela Quintana, to the United States to meet with friendly government officials, including attorney general Janet Reno, and with Elian himself. The event was marked, as all such are, by grotesque inversions of truth. A stone-faced Reno insisted that "the person who speaks for this child is his one surviving parent." But the reason Elián has only one surviving parent is that his other, with whom he lived, died in the effort to bring him to this country, and to freedom. The National Council of Churches flew the grandmothers to the United States. Thus they did the bidding of a country whose churches labor under the strictest political control, and where freedom of worship is a joke. Raquel Rodriguez defamed her dead daughter by saying that she had been "pushed" into fleeing by a man who "was violent and threatened her." But she was leaving an entire country run by a violent man who threatens anyone—black marketeer, Seventh Day Adventist, homosexual—who deviates from his party line.

The one moment of clean air and good sense in the spectacle came from Sister Jeanne O'Laughlin, a 70-year-old Dominican nun and college president, described as a good friend of Janet Reno's. Her house was picked as neutral ground on which Elián and his grandmothers could briefly meet. She went into the encounter neutral, but came out of it with her mind made up. The grandmothers, she said, seemed to be under pressure. "The child has been in the torment of the seas and now he's been in the torment of political agendas. Somehow, we must find for him calm seas, at least for a while."

Some editorial cartoons have joked, more or less good-humoredly, over the distractions and witlessness of American life, to which Elián is now exposed (video games, pro sports, etc.). But the socialist life he left is characterized by regular, orchestrated, society-wide storms. There is no escaping them, because your rulers, who are also your employers, who are also potentially your jailers, take strict attendance. Elián is now the center of a storm of his own; if he goes back, he will join the crowd scenes in all the future storms Castro chooses to summon up.

AHOY, CONSERVATIVES

With Bradley wounded like the stag
That hung in Granny's parlor,
And Gore transmogrified into
A pawing pit bull snarler,
The time has come for all good men
To seek the best dogcatcher,
And W. is all there is
This side of Lady Thatcher.

—W. H. VON DREELE

OBITUARY

Champion of Champions

DON BUDGE belonged to an imperial succession of great American tennis players who grew up on the cement public courts of southern California: Ellsworth ("Elly") Vines, Budge, Jack ("Jake") Kramer, Richard ("Pancho") Gonzales. They all played the "big," or power, game. Kramer formulated it as "controlled power," employing an important adjective. He and Budge theorized about "controlled power" for us junior players at the West Side Tennis Club after the war. They despised mere "sluggers" and mere "hitters." Budge may have been the greatest of the great players named above.

But a caveat is needed. Such players, when they are dominant, seem to enter a phase when they are unbeatable. Theoretically, there is a limit to the things a tennis racket can do to a fuzzy sphere. The great players push close to this limit, the edge of the envelope; they enter the "Zone." This tends to moot arguments about comparative greatness.

Don Budge was the first player to win the "Grand Slam," a term from the popular country-club game of bridge, and

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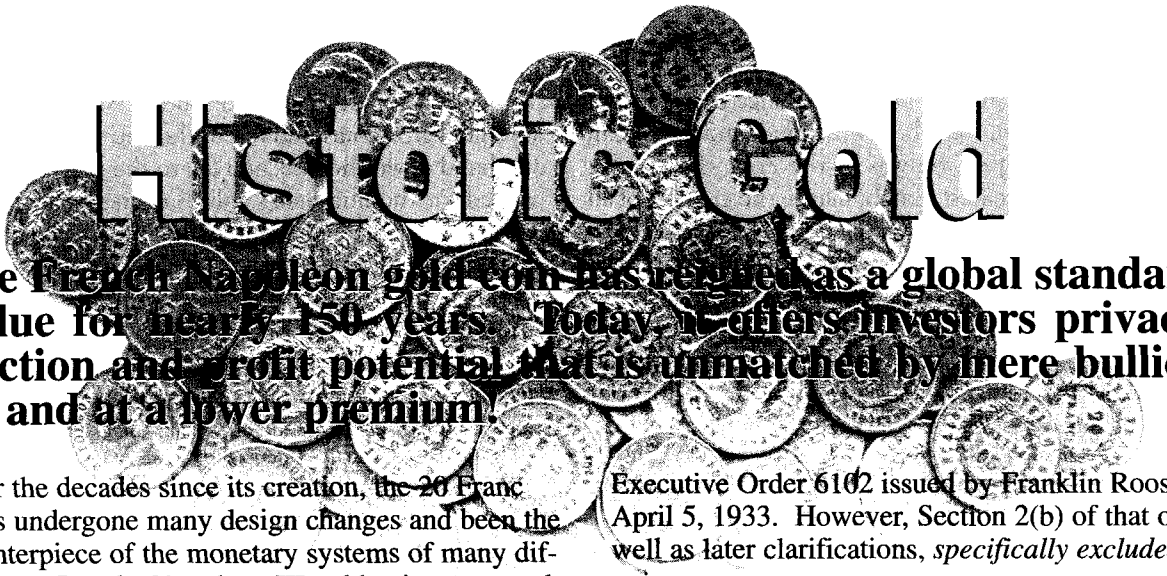
Historic Gold



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applied by sportswriter Allison Danzig to Budge's 1938 feat of winning the Australian, French, All England, and American championships. That year, he was in the Zone. But Budge may have played his greatest match, maybe the greatest of all matches, on July 20, 1937, at Wimbledon. This was a Davis Cup match, pitting the United States against Germany, the red-haired Californian against the great and elegant Baron Gottfried von Cramm. If Budge had lost that match, the next year's Davis Cup contest would have been played in Berlin, becoming a Nazi political extravaganza. Indeed, Adolf Hitler phoned the Baron just before he walked out onto Centre Court with Budge.

The Baron, who despised the Nazis, was also for an afternoon in the Zone. Informed opinion holds that no other player in the world could have beaten either of them that day. Von Cramm went up 4–1 over Budge in the fifth set. Budge fought his way back to 7–6. The deciding game went through 18 points. On match point for Budge, von Cramm hit a sharp forehand crosscourt and ran to the net. Budge lunged, hit his forehand down the line, and fell to the grass. Lying there, he waited for the linesman's call. But first "I heard the cheers begin to swell. They were different cheers. The ball had landed miraculously in the corner." Knots of exhausted spectators remained in the darkening stands for hours after the players left the court.

Until the 1960s, tennis was intimately connected with the idea of the gentleman. Budge's contemporary, the near-great Ted Schroeder, summed it up: "What impressed me, and what distresses me now, is that Budge epitomized what we were all taught as tennis players, which is so lacking now. Look like a champ, act like a champ, try to play like a champ."

J. Donald Budge died at 84, of complications after an automobile accident and a long hospitalization.

—Jeffrey Hart

■ NOTES & ASIDES ■

■ Dear Bill: Okay, you've had bigger honors . . . but, I assure you, none more heartfelt!

Warmest regards,
Pat Sajak
Severna Park, Md.

Dear Pat: I like yours the *best*! Many, many thanks.

Cordially, Bill

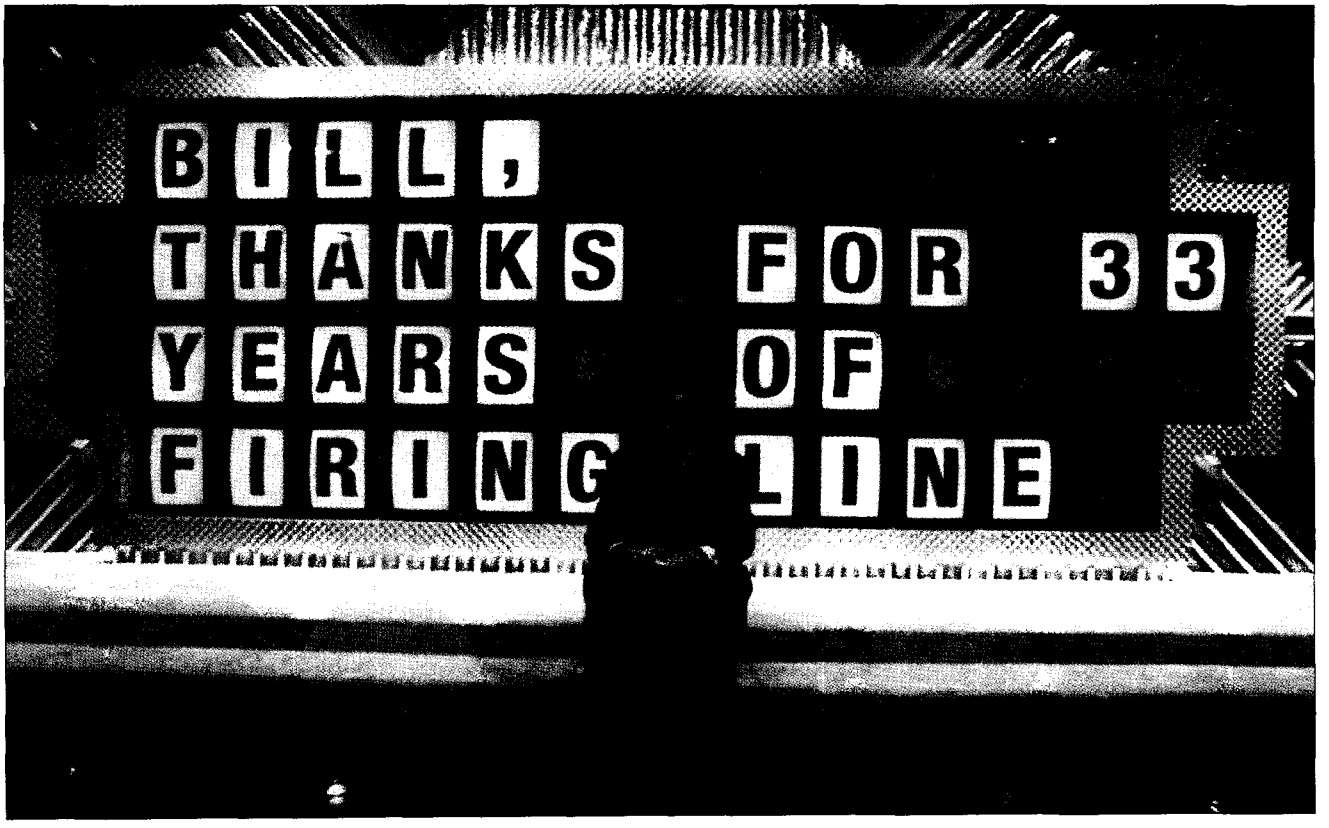
■ Dear Mr. Buckley: I would appreciate a response to this question: What is the definition of "not for profit," in contrast to "non-profit"? I think your answer would enlighten many of your readers, since I believe "not for profit" is a misleading term.

Respectfully,
William M. Fuchs, MD
Huntington, N.Y.

Dear Dr. Fuchs: Relying on whatever competence I have in language, I herewith opine that there is no difference. If the two terms have acquired a meaning under law, I don't know it. You should consult your friendly lawyer or, for that matter, why not your IRS agent?

Cordially,

—WFB



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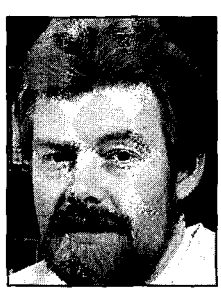

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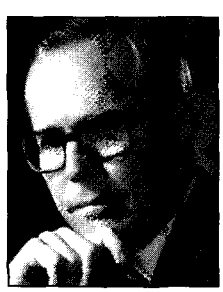

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■ POLITICS ■

W.'s Man in Michigan

The story of John Engler

JOHN J. MILLER

John Engler by Roman Genn

ON January 13, Michigan governor John Engler rose early in Lansing and caught a private jet to Washington, D.C. His State of the State speech was less than a week away, and he spent part of the day holed up in an office working on it. But the American Enterprise Institute had invited him to a forum on "How Would George W. Bush Govern?" That was worth a hassle.

The organizers knew they had a prize panelist in Engler. He's mentioned as a possible cabinet secretary, White House chief of staff—and maybe even vice president. When a moderator asked Engler how much a President Bush would rely on Republican governors for policy advice, Engler, who has had weight problems his whole life, replied: "Well, I would suggest heavily—that he would rely on heavy governors."

It was a witty remark, but perhaps a meaningful one too. Although neither Engler nor any of his staff has talked about jobs in a Bush administration—"I can honestly say we've never had that discussion," says a top aide—it's impossible to suppress the speculation. Four years ago, Engler was short-listed by Bob Dole for the GOP's vice-presidential slot. Last year, the Bush campaign registered "bushengler.com" as a web domain name. It's easy to see why. As a longtime Bush loyalist—backing the father in 1980, doing so again in 1988, and endorsing the son early in the current cycle—Engler is a known commodity in Austin. As a tax-cutting Republican governor from a labor-union state in the Midwest, he brings experience to the ticket and helps deliver contested electoral votes. And as a pro-life Catholic conservative, he simultaneously satisfies the party base and reaches out to Reagan Democrats.

Engler, now 51, got his start in politics in 1970, when the 22-year-old beat an incumbent Republican for a seat in the Michigan legislature. He was generally considered a rural conservative, and even wound up with Russell Kirk as a constituent and mentor. Kirk, a philosopher and one of the most important conservatives of the century, adored Engler; the last book the older man ever inscribed was made out to the governor. "Russell used to say that John has an ability to reform with a disposition to preserve," recalls Kirk's widow, Annette.

But the governor didn't act like a conservative at all times. In 1980, he supported Howard Baker in the GOP presidential primaries. When Baker bowed out, Engler switched to George Bush—and voted for him on the day Ronald Reagan clinched the nomination. He had more influence on local races, such as when he helped organize the 1983 recall elections of two tax-hiking state senators, both Democrats. Their defeats catapulted him to the post of state-senate majority leader.

In 1990, he challenged Gov. James Blanchard and, running a crack campaign, beat him in an upset. Democrats still complain that lousy weather on Election Day depressed their turnout.

Engler is an unlikely success in the era of blow-dried politics. He's more a cloakroom arm-twister than a telegenic bully-pulpit man. In Lansing, he's known as a bruiser. "Win or lose, he will always take a pound of flesh from you," says one Michigan Republican. Yet there's very little turnover on his staff, and he can be strikingly loyal. When his chief of staff's mother died in 1991, the governor had been scheduled to throw out the first pitch at Tiger Stadium on Opening Day; Engler canceled the appearance and went to the funeral instead.

A double chin and Humpty Dumpty physique are liabilities in the television age—and especially so for Engler, thanks to a story that first surfaced four years ago. In 1969, during the Vietnam War, Engler took an Army physical but failed it because he was overweight. He flunked again three months later for the same reason. Oh, well, some people are short, others are heavy. Except that Engler was only two pounds over the limit—each time. "That's a bag of sliders [small, greasy hamburgers] and two Slurpees," *Detroit News* columnist Pete Waldmeir has written. It can be argued that, if Engler had really wanted to serve, he would have shed the 32 ounces over three months. The story has never amounted to much, except embarrassment. But who's to say this isn't what kept him off the Dole ticket?

If that old tale prevents Engler from joining a Bush ticket this summer, it would be a shame. His record through nine years is impressive: 26 tax cuts, saving the public some $11 billion; fewer state employees; and a plummeting abortion rate. Engler has also reshaped the state judiciary: Michigan may have the most conservative state supreme court in the nation. When the Cato Institute released its biennial report card on governors two years ago, it declared that "there is almost nothing not to admire" about Engler's work.

He's no compassionate conservative, either. In one of his first acts as governor, Engler tossed 80,000 able-bodied adults off the dole. The media savaged him daily. A tent city dubbed "Englerville" sprouted on the lawn of the capitol. Left-wing activists tried to blame several wintertime deaths on the new policy. Engler's approval rating sank to about

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30 percent, making him look like a one-termer. The state teachers' union distributed a nasty bumper sticker: "John Engler has no kids and he hates yours."

Engler took care of that problem in 1994: His wife gave birth to triplets (all girls). The state's Rust Belt economy also started to improve. The unemployment rate has been below the national average for six years. Engler also earned a national reputation as a welfare-reform leader, trimming the state rolls by two-thirds. He coasted to reelection in 1994 on the heels of a voter-approved school-financing package that included a major property-tax rollback. He won again four years later, easily besting Geoffrey Fieger, a foul-mouthed trial lawyer who once represented Jack Kevorkian.

If future historians write about a Republican revolution during the 1990s, they'll be referring to the GOP's strength outside Washington as much as to the 1994 takeover of Congress. In 1990, there were just 21 Republican governors. Today, there are 30. Engler, who is now third in seniority, has championed this group for years. Following the Dole debacle, he made it known to anybody who would listen that the next Republican nominee should be one of the governors. Shortly after the 1998 races, he decided that Bush was his man.

Since then, Engler has been a tireless Bush advocate. He joined Bush's 10-member exploratory committee last year and locked up endorsements from virtually every member of Michigan's GOP establishment. He also turned on the state's money spigot. Some $3 million of Bush's campaign treasury has come from Michigan, in large part because of Engler. The state party moved its primary forward to February 22. "We're the firewall," explains John Truscott, Engler's press secretary. "Bush either stops bleeding here or gets the big-state momentum he needs to pick up the nomination." Engler also sent at least one member of his staff to Iowa to help Bush in the caucuses, and his office is in regular contact with Austin on everything from speech drafts to issues research.

The governor has even come out against a school-choice initiative that will probably appear on the state ballot in November. He believes that a high-profile campaign over vouchers would boost Democratic turnout and thereby imperil the reelection of Sen. Spencer Abraham, endanger GOP control of the state House of Representatives right before congressional redistricting (watch out, David Bonior!), and make it harder for the GOP presidential nominee to carry Michigan. Engler certainly isn't against competition in education: Michigan students and parents now have extensive public-school choice, and more than 50,000 students attend charter schools. So his ironfisted assaults on the initiative have puzzled some longtime backers. But the fallout probably won't be great. "A lot of conservatives are willing to give him a pass on this one," says Lawrence Reed, president of the Mackinac Center, a Midland-based think tank that supports the initiative.

And it surely won't hurt his standing in the Bush camp. Which raises the obvious question: Who should get the vice-presidential nomination? "There's less of a need for Bush to go to the governors because he is one," says Engler. "He has our support. We view him as one of our own." Engler says there are many good choices in Congress or the states—he names John McCain and Pennsylvania governor Tom Ridge as possibilities—and then mentions a third category: former officeholders with extensive government experience but now in the private sector. He describes Dick Cheney without using the name.

Would he take the job himself? "I'll wait until somebody asks before I respond to that question," he says. The consensus among friends and colleagues is that he would accept if Bush came calling, but that he doesn't want the job as much as he did four years ago. His wife is said to be reluctant to leave Michigan. And Engler probably wouldn't settle for anything less than veep. "There is no cabinet post that would give him more satisfaction than being governor of Michigan," says Richard McClellan, a Lansing lawyer and one of Engler's closest friends.

Perhaps the Mackinac Center's Reed puts it best: "It used to be you could tell Engler was getting serious about a campaign when he dropped weight. He did that in 1990 and then in 1996. He's not doing it now."

If Bush wants Engler to join him in Washington, he may just have to draft him. **NR**

■ CUBA ■

A Boy and a Nation

What the Elián case reveals

JOHN O'SULLIVAN

"IN a drop of rain," wrote the historian Lewis Namier, "can be seen the colors of the sun." And it is undoubtedly true that small events can reveal large truths. The dispute over whether Elián Gonzalez should be returned to his father in Cuba or allowed to stay in the United States with his Miami-based relatives is a small event by most standards. But, owing to the extraordinary circumstances of his story, the child has become a cause célèbre. He is either an actual victim kept from his loving father and family in Cuba by an outdated anti-Communist mindset, or the potential victim of a cruel regime and its naïve allies in the American body politic. Of course, that is not quite how the choice is portrayed in the mainstream media—perhaps because many in the media are themselves naïvely "useful idiots" through whom Fidel Castro hopes to influence the U.S.

For whatever reason, the mainstream story does indeed frame Elián's plight in a way that subtly directs viewers and readers to favor his return to Cuba: namely, as a clash between "politics" and "family values," or between "anti-Communism" and "family values." Yet something prevents us from accepting these interpretations at face value. It is hard not to notice, for instance, that those denouncing "politics" in this case are liberal Democrats who otherwise see government as the cure for all ills. Or that "family values" in this one unique instance is the slogan of feminists and radicals. Or, above all, that a clash between anti-Communism and "family values," which might have been expected to provoke a civil war within conservatism and the GOP, has produced no such strife.

Almost all conservatives recognize the rights of Elián's father but doubt that he is free to exercise them in Castro's Cuba.

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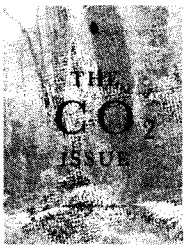
Since 1981, it has been predicted that climate apocalypse would be apparent by now. It hasn't happened. Now the timetable has been extended to 2050 or 2100. *Then* we'll see the disaster. Observations tell us it won't happen. All of these horror stories about wild weather, searing drought, rampaging floods, howling blizzards, mega-hurricanes, and rampant tropical disease are entirely based on computer models.



What Was True 20 Years Ago Is True Today. When Gus Speth issued "Global Energy Future and the Carbon Dioxide Problem" in January 1981 as his final act at the White House Council of Environmental Quality, he wrote, "Each model ... has limited ability to include effects from various complex feedback mechanisms and to compensate for natural variations in temperature and climate. The validity of the simulations has not been verified—in part because climatic effects of increased CO2 concentrations have not yet been detected."

Weather Is Not Evidence of Climate Change. In January 2000, *The New York Times* reported, "Experts say no specific weather development can yet be attributed to global climate change." Burrow deep into responsible coverage of climate change and you'll find similar quotes. But to convince you that humans are ruining climate and are to blame for bad weather, professional environmentalists buy ads characterizing "virtual climate" as reality. Meanwhile, in the real world, things are fine and the weather is within a normal range.

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They agree too on inviting him to Florida so that he can decide Elián's future free from actual or implied threats. And no conservative has suggested that the father's wishes, once genuinely known, should be disregarded because it would be a victory for Castro and Communism. Outside of the Cuban-American community, anti-Communism has never made an appearance. It is the bogeyman in this debate.

Anti–anti-communism, however, is in full flood. The longer the controversy continues, the more echoes of Cold War rhetoric are heard *from the Left*. It is as if the Sixties generation, having almost burst from frustration since the Fall of the Wall, has finally recovered its early "idealism." Veterans of campus revolutions have awoken from their long sleep of compromise and feel like revolutionary *campesinos* again. Here is a conflict in which Fidel is opposed by those awful old Cuban-American reactionaries in Florida. In that battle they do not need to think about which side to take—even if they have to be careful about what arguments to employ.

Feminists are in the deepest disguise on this issue. Fathers who normally appear in their rhetoric as "deadbeat dads" or worse are suddenly the indispensable pal every boy must have for a healthy upbringing. Unconventional families are no longer praised as equally valid or a matter of "choice," since Elián's relatives in Miami might benefit from such radical gender politics. No, they are indisputably second-best to the traditional family. And when contemplating Elián's fate, not a single feminist even thinks of "children's rights"—not even Hillary Clinton.

Also traveling in heavy ideological camouflage are the Christian Friends of Castro, in particular the National Council of Churches and its secretary, the Rev. Joan Brown Campbell, who was among those urging that "we need to be concerned for a small boy rather than politics." Politics rarely crosses the Rev. Joan's mind. In 1998 she called on Christians to support the Kyoto Treaty as "a litmus test for the faith community." In 1994 she demanded that Jean-Bertrand Aristide be restored to power in Haiti. And some years later she told the *New York Times*: "If you look at the Nazi regime, you see in it the philosophy of Christian superiority."

In Elián's case, the NCC has been assuring the media that the boy's father is under no pressure from the Havana regime and really does want his son to return. And it arranged for the visit of Elián's grandmothers to the U.S. The smooth operation of this agitprop went wrong only when a Catholic nun, Sr. Jeanne O'Laughlin, whom Janet Reno had asked to superintend the meeting between Elián and the grandmothers, reported that she had sensed real fear on the part of the grandmothers and, as a result, no longer believed that Elián should be returned. No such fear had been noticed by the NCC and its operatives; maybe they were the cause of it.

That leaves two other specimens. Gary Hart must represent the frank and open Fidelistas. The former senator has become a novelist, his latest being *I, Che Guevara*, a fantasy about how Castro resigns and holds free elections. Curiously, Hart sees his scenario as a Bad Thing: "Any sort of election in Cuba would be dominated by the worst excesses of American politics—corrupting campaign costs, media sensationalism, money polling." In the novel, Cuba is rescued by an elderly Che Guevara who returns to the island, preaches a simple Jeffersonian liberalism against the corrupt politics of television and money, and beds a blond American reporter.

If Hart confined his fantasies to novel-writing, who could complain except his readers? Like all the other resolutely non-political figures, however, he too wants Elián to be returned to Cuba. His rationale is the surprisingly candid one that Castro is an okay guy. Or, in his own words, that he is "a fascinating creature . . . more a nationalist than a Communist." He "just doesn't want the bad elements that ruled his country before him to come back." More a nationalist than a Communist! How can one really object to someone so untouched by knowledge of totalitarian evil that he can happily repeat the agitprop phrases that even the totalitarians have long abandoned?

By Roman Genn

A more complex case is presented by Professor Tony Judt, writing in the *New York Times*. Judt also appears in a familiar guise, however—that of the sophisticated but sympathetic European intellectual who admires America's energy and idealism but shakes his head over its perversion of those virtues, namely its obsessive and dogmatic anti-Communism. What distinguishes Judt from Hart is that the former has no illusions about Communism while the latter has every illusion. "Communism was indeed monstrous," Judt writes, "a dysfunctional inversion of social and human values . . . [in which] doctrinal projects took precedence; personal and familial relations meant nothing." But he goes on to argue that "dogmatic anti-communism shares many of these traits" and that, in particular, since "no one in his or her own right mind could live or want to live a normal life under a communist dictator . . . there is no need to respect the claims or feelings of the citizens of communist states."

Obviously it is Elián's father who is being discussed here. But is the professor giving a fair account of the skeptics' argument? No one I have heard is arguing that the father's demands should be ignored because it is in principle impossible to imagine that someone could want to live under Castro. Plainly, as we know from eastern Europe, some people liked living under Communism—a small minority, to be sure, but a significant one. Most people do not like it; but they are restrained from saying so because they are subject to cruel intimidation, both directly against themselves and against their loved ones. What former refugees from Communism like George Borjas have argued is

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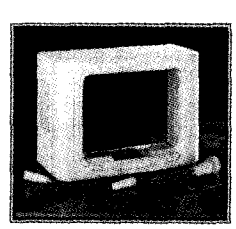

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that we cannot be sure what the father wishes as long as he and other family members remain in Cuba. It is precisely because we should respect the claims and feelings of those living under such pressures, therefore, that we should ensure, as best we can, that their public claims genuinely reflect their private feelings.

Sr. O'Laughlin has already decided, on the basis of close contact and examination, that the grandmothers were acting insincerely and out of fear. Maybe that is true of the father also. A simple way to find out would be to invite all family members, including the father, to America to take Elián back after a week of formalities. If they all returned to Cuba, my fellow anti-Communists and I would accept their decision. Does such an argument really place doctrinal projects over personal and familial relations?

Professor Judt's apparent unwillingness to consider this solution raises the question of whether he is subject to some obsessions of his own. After all, whatever else the Elián Gonzalez case is about, it is not an example of "the world's only great power exploiting a private tragedy to score points against a diminutive totalitarian island." Quite the contrary. The U.S. government is seeking *to return the boy*, and is prevented from doing so only because his relatives seek to protect him legally against a poor and unfree future. It is in Havana that vast state-sponsored rallies make Elián a symbol of anti-Yanqui imperialism; in the United States a skewed but serious debate is taking place about what will be best for him. And what exactly is diminutive about Cuban totalitarianism? Yes, Cuba is a small place, but its government is large, cruel, and brutal.

■

Gary Hart protests that Castro is 'more a nationalist than a Communist'—a species of leftist agitprop.

■

In the midst of his reflections on the dogmatic harshness of American anti-Communism, does Professor Judt ever pause to wonder why a loving father would want his son to grow up even in a diminutive prison? And if not, why not? **NR**

■ **PUBLIC POLICY** ■

A Myth Dies Hard

Immigrant entrepreneurs, then and now

STEVEN A. CAMAROTA & MARK KRIKORIAN

WALK through an immigrant neighborhood in any American city, and you'll get an impression of intense entrepreneurial activity. Street vendors sell everything from produce to pajamas, while small shops and restaurants advertise in the community's native language. Stories of immigrant businesses revitalizing neighborhoods have become a staple of news coverage on immigration.

Indeed, many conservatives cite immigrant entrepreneurship in reassuring those skeptical about the impact of mass immigration. "Today's immigrants—be they Asian, European, or Latino—are refueling our entrepreneurial economy," observes Joel Kotkin in *Inc.* magazine. The late economist Julian Simon argued that one of the reasons immigration should be increased was that "immigrants clearly have a higher propensity for self-employment than do natives." And California businessman Ron Unz goes even further, saying that "the overwhelming majority of California's immigrants are self-reliant and entrepreneurial."

The admission of 700,000 to 900,000 legal immigrants and several hundred thousand illegal immigrants each year has wide-ranging effects on the United States. In recent years, there has been growing concern over high poverty rates and welfare use among immigrants. Some point to immigrant entrepreneurship as a factor that offsets some of immigration's costs: If immigrants are significantly more entrepreneurial than natives, they have a positive effect on the economy well beyond their numbers, by starting businesses at higher rates than natives and by creating new employment opportunities for workers and more choices for consumers.

Despite the platitudes, however, there is no real evidence that immigrants are particularly entrepreneurial. Most of the evidence offered is anecdotal, or based on studies of immigrants from one country or in one city or one industry. In an effort to examine this question more systematically, we have looked at the actual self-employment patterns of all immigrants and natives, using census data.

What we found is that immigrants were indeed significantly more entrepreneurial than natives in the past, but that the immigrant advantage has disappeared. Between 1960 and 1997, the self-employment rate of immigrants fell from 13.8 percent to 11.3 percent, while the self-employment rate for natives increased from 9.6 to 11.8 percent. The difference is now statistically insignificant; by 1997, therefore, the presence of immigrants had no effect on the overall level of entrepreneurship in the U.S.

Several factors probably account for this decline. Research indicates that the average education level of immigrants has fallen relative to that of natives. Since education is positively correlated with self-employment, falling relative levels of education are likely to account for some of the decline. Second, substantial immigration-law changes made in the 1960s, along with other factors, have resulted in a significant shift in the source of immigrants, away from Europe and toward Latin America and Asia. Because entrepreneurship varies by country of origin, this also probably accounts for some of the decline. Third, immigration has been increasing steadily since the 1960s. As a result, new arrivals make up a larger share of immigrants than they did in 1960. Since newly arrived immigrants are less likely to be self-employed than more established immigrants, this, too, is an important factor. But whatever the reasons for the drop in immigrant

Mr. Camarota is director of research at the Center for Immigration Studies. Mr. Krikorian is executive director of CIS.

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entrepreneurship, it is clear that self-employment is no longer a distinguishing trait of immigrants.

But what if immigrant entrepreneurs created many more jobs than native entrepreneurs, thus having an impact out of proportion to their numbers? The data here, too, show that immigrants have no advantage. In 1997, 87 percent of immigrant and 86 percent of native entrepreneurs had fewer than 10 workers; 7 percent in each category had between 10 and 25 workers; and only 6 and 7 percent, respectively, of self-employed immigrants and natives had more than 25 workers. Their job-creation achievement, therefore, is virtually indistinguishable from that of natives.

Likewise with income. The data show that immigrant entrepreneurs have somewhat higher incomes—in 1997, $20,710 compared to $18,447 for natives—but the difference is too small to be statistically significant.

■

Despite the platitudes, there is no real evidence that immigrants are particularly entrepreneurial.

■

What about immigrant entrepreneurship in central cities? Surely immigrants there operate businesses at rates unmatched by natives. We looked at this question in two ways: First, we examined self-employment rates in four of the largest immigrant-receiving cities—New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, and San Francisco. Only the cities were examined; no suburbs were included. We found that in all four of these cities, natives actually had higher selfemployment rates than did immigrants. In addition, we found no difference in self-employment between immigrants and natives when we examined all of the nation's central cities combined. Interestingly, we also discovered that the total self-employment rate (immigrant and native) in the top nine immigrant-receiving metro areas was actually slightly lower than in those parts of the country with few immigrants. The presence of immigrants as entrepreneurs or their availability as workers thus appears to have no obvious effect on entrepreneurial activity.

Finally, many entrepreneurs chase their dreams part-time, on nights and weekends. But here again, the percentage of persons who, while not self-employed at their primary jobs, work for themselves part-time, was higher among natives than among immigrants.

So, if immigrants are not more entrepreneurial than natives, why does the stereotype exist? First, old impressions die hard, and many observers may simply be ascribing the characteristics of past immigrants to today's immigrants. Second, high rates of entrepreneurship among some immigrant groups may be falsely attributed to all immigrants; we did find, for example, that Korean, Middle Eastern, and Canadian immigrants have substantially higher self-employment rates and incomes than natives. Third, policymakers, reporters, and the public are more likely to come into contact with immigrant entrepreneurs than with immigrant workers. The immigrant restaurateur who greets customers, for example, is much more likely to be remembered than the immigrant cooks and dishwashers whom the patron never sees. Since most people make generalizations based on their own experience, it should not be surprising that immigrants are seen as particularly entrepreneurial.

With 27 million immigrants now living in the country (twice the number in 1910), and more than 1 million legal and illegal immigrants entering each year, the effect of immigration is profound. But no matter how one feels about immigration, the continuing national debate should be based on a careful evaluation of the available data and not on anecdote or individual immigrant successes or failures. The available evidence indicates that immigration has no discernible effect on the overall level of entrepreneurship. There is no question that immigration has real effects on the United States, but increasing the level of entrepreneurship is not one of them. As immigration continues to be the subject of intense national debate, the focus should be on its real costs and real benefits. **NR**

■ THE CULTURE ■

Rebels Yell

An old flag and its bearers

DAVE SHIFLETT

WITH the South Carolina primary looming, our presidential candidates have been pressed to pass judgment on the Confederate flag, which flaps above the South Carolina statehouse whenever the wind bothers to blow through sleepy Columbia. In a time when national politics infuses every aspect of life, including the amount of water used to flush our toilets, this is no great surprise. Nor have the candidates' answers been.

The larger question is this: What do people who have a *real* interest in the issue think? Most South Carolinians, according to polls, say the flag should come down. Armstrong Williams reported recently that even his fellow South Carolinian Strom Thurmond believes the colors should be struck, though Thurmond has not made the statement publicly, perhaps fearing the controversy might put an early end to his political career.

The other day, a Yankee editor of this fine publication called to ask what I thought about the flag controversy. Though a blood-and-thunder descendant of Confederate soldiers, one of whom worked in Marse Robert (E. Lee)'s signal corps, I have taken no public position, at least until now. But because the editor is offering a few bucks (Federal), he can certainly be obliged.

The first point to make is that those of us who reside in or near the capital (meaning Richmond) don't much care what they fly above the South Carolina statehouse. That is a state, after all, which lay flat on its back for a good ravaging by the video-poker industry, which is the lowest form of wagering there is, cockfighting included. Before a court ruling removed the industry's legal sanction, there was real fear that the state

Mr. Shiflett writes for numerous publications.

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flag was about to be embroidered with a poker machine, which it no doubt should have been.

More to the point, the South Carolina situation has very little to do with preserving southern heritage. If its somewhat undistinguished legislature had been doing business under the colors since 1862, instead of 1962, that would be another matter. Yet South Carolina employed the flag as a thumb in the eye of the civil-rights battalions, which is a bit too reminiscent of the fellows who unfurl the colors outside the state pen on execution night. (I believe, though don't know for sure, that this honor is generally withheld unless the condemned prisoner happens to be of African extraction.)

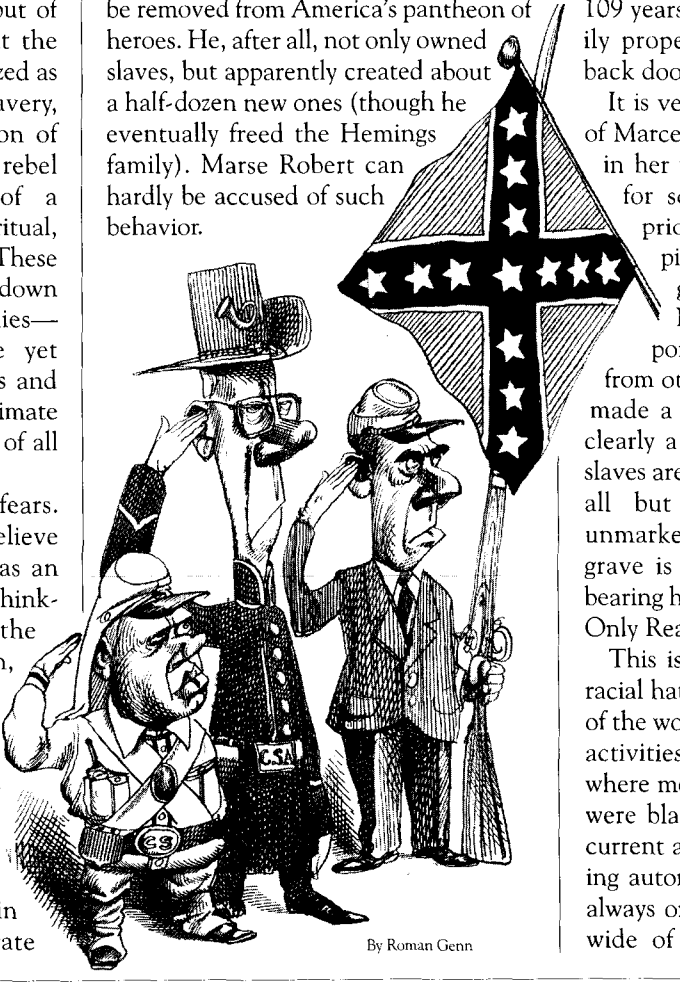
In other words, there is no sense of grace and decorum involved in South Carolina's use of the flag, and, as Marse Robert taught us, there is no substitute for grace and decorum.

This position, to be sure, will not be shared by some who wear their Confederate heritage on their sleeves. I speak not of the yahoo element that shows up outside the state pen, but of intelligent beings who insist that the Confederacy is wrongly characterized as having been primarily about slavery, when indeed only a small portion of southerners owned slaves. This rebel remnant promotes a vision of a Confederacy that was agrarian, spiritual, and wary of dynamic capitalism. These rebs reason that if the flag comes down over Columbia, their arch-enemies—the moral preeners—will have yet another quill for their battle caps and additional momentum for their ultimate goal of scrubbing the South clean of all rebel remembrance.

There is something to these fears. The preeners, who apparently believe the Union Army was organized as an instrument of enlightened racial thinking, are quick to compare the Confederacy to the Third Reich, Lee to Hitler, and grits to sauerkraut. Here in Richmond, a hotly disputed public mural of Marse Robert was recently firebombed—a hit that was no doubt a preener operation. The rebs fear the grand finale will be the annihilation of Monument Avenue, a scenario in which the statues of Confederate heroes are shipped to a remote museum, leaving the statue of tennis star Arthur Ashe as the lone victor in Richmond's war for permissible history.

That seems a stretch, though you never know. Not long ago the notion that Thomas Jefferson would be tagged for fathering children by Sally Hemings was considered highly unlikely, yet the tag has been indelibly made and we're starting to think of Tom as a fellow who could have taught Bill a thing or two about screwing the help (though Sally Hemings, to be sure, was hardly a volunteer). It would not be totally surprising if candidates entering the Virginia primary are asked if they believe Jefferson should be removed from America's pantheon of heroes. He, after all, not only owned slaves, but apparently created about a half-dozen new ones (though he eventually freed the Hemings family). Marse Robert can hardly be accused of such behavior.

There is no sense of grace and decorum in South Carolina's use of the flag, and there is no substitute for those.



By Roman Genn

Nonetheless, I doubt the preeners will succeed in removing Lee, Jackson, Stuart, et al., from their perches. And to give the preeners their due, there is definitely something to their charge that the flag is a rallying point for racists. Most of the people I know who defend the flag—and, in some cases, fly it—share Lincoln and Lee's racial attitudes, which held that blacks were a pace or two behind intellectually. Where the preeners are wrong is in insisting that racism is always a form of hatred. Thomas Jefferson was very much a racist, but who believes he hated Sally Hemings? The opposite was probably true.

If I might be allowed an Oprah moment, I have seen this attitude firsthand in an ancient uncle who lives within hiking distance of Appomattox Court House. He flies the rebel flag every day and is certain of only a few things: the delights of vodka, the decline of America, and the inferiority of the black race. Interestingly enough, this uncle was raised in part by an ex-slave, Marcella Dunn, who lived to be 109 years old and is buried on the family property not far from my uncle's back door.

It is very affecting to hear him speak of Marcella coming across the meadow in her white dress, screaming at him for some offense or another just prior to delivering a good whipping. There is no mistaking the great affection he had for her. Not surprisingly, he is quick to point out that she was "different" from other blacks (Jefferson no doubt made a similar distinction). She was clearly a family favorite. Several score slaves are buried on the old home place, all but one beneath ragged and unmarked pieces of slate. Marcella's grave is marked by a flat creek rock bearing her name and this epitaph: "She Only Read the Bible."

This is not to suggest that profound racial hatred did not thrive in this neck of the woods. My uncle also tells tales of activities at the county lynching tree, where most, though not all, the victims were blacks. It is only to say that the current assumption that racialist thinking automatically reflects hatred is not always on the mark, and is often quite wide of it. The point can be made

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another way: If the number of Americans who believe in racial superiority (and thus inferiority) were suddenly flashed across the sky, we would no doubt be amazed that there is any racial harmony, or progress, at all.

Yet times have changed immensely, even in the heart of the Confederacy. Virginia elected a black governor, Arthur Ashe got a spot on Monument Avenue, and the lynching tree in question was harvested by a furniture company. These days it is probably serving as a table or a chair, perhaps in a black household. Or, since we're speculating, perhaps it is now deployed as a bar in some South Carolina tavern, a place where preeners and southern partisans alike gather on Saturday afternoons to watch a truly ghastly spectacle: the University of South Carolina's football team.

Once the flag controversy is settled, the Fighting Gamecocks, as they are known, should be the next target of reform. **NR**

■ LAW ■

Andy, Get Your Gun

To pack heat in New York

ANDREW STUTTAFORD

I DIDN'T want to be Bernie Goetz. I just wanted a handgun. Legally. Something to keep at home. A move within Manhattan had taken me away from the comforts of doorman security (you know how it is). A little extra protection seemed prudent, 911 calls can take a while to answer, and Rudy isn't going to be mayor forever. Should be pretty straightforward, I thought. In my native Britain it would be impossible. But this is the United States, home of the Second Amendment; land of liberty. Government knows its place. They do things differently in America.

But then there's New York City, a place where the old constitutional certainties have been replaced by the rules of the NYPD, License Division. If you believe that this is a local problem, a Big Apple nightmare that could never apply to you, think again. A dozen states already insist on handgun permits. Citing as always "the children," it is clear that Candidates Gore and Bradley want to expand on this at the federal level. The Brady Act was not enough. There's earnest talk of licensing, registration, additional checks to which, allegedly, only the unreasonable could object.

But the unreasonable have a point. New York City's licensing system has turned a right into a privilege. Like all privileges, it's enjoyed only by the few.

The armed and not dangerous Mr. Stuttaford is a frequent contributor to NATIONAL REVIEW.

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There may be more than 7 million people in the five boroughs, but only 40,000 have valid handgun permits. Licensing isn't the thin end. It is the wedge. If you want to find out what that modest-sounding licensing requirement can mean in the hands of a bureaucracy that doesn't want you to have a handgun, come here, to the City.

It starts with a form, of course—PD 643-041 (Rev. 1-94) h1. Some of the questions are obvious (arrest record and, excitingly, "aliases"). Others are odd ("Have you ever been denied appointment in a civil service system?") or, seemingly, aimed at members of the Clinton administration (list any incidents of "Temporary Loss of Memory"). Watch out for question 19: "Have you ever had or applied for any type of license or permit issued to you by any City, State or Federal agency?" You haven't? Well, if you are a driver you have. Forget to mention your driver's license and you will be rejected and have to start all over again.

Next, submit the form. This, naturally, can be done only in one place, and in person: Room 110 at Police Headquarters, Manhattan. Nowhere else will do—not Room 109, and certainly not Room 111. Anywhere in Brooklyn, Queens, Staten Island, or the Bronx is out of the question (although Queens—and nowhere else—is where you must go for your rifle or shotgun permit). The form needs supporting documentation: yes, including that driver's license. It is not enough, however, merely to present your driver's license. A notarized statement certifying that you did indeed apply for that driver's license is also essential. The fact that your photograph and signature are on the license is irrelevant. No notary, and it's no go.

It's at this point that capitalism comes to the rescue. Even in New York. There is no need to struggle through this process alone. A small industry of license consultants has sprung up. Some, doubtless, add little value, but the repeated official warnings against them are very reminiscent of something that might have come from a pre-*Miranda* cop explaining that, no, no, you really don't need that fancy lawyer. I opted for the pistol-consultant equivalent ($395 all-in) of a fancy lawyer, Larry Goodson of License Services, "Specialists in Firearms Licensing, Training, Selection and Safety," an outfit in Queens. We never met. Like Charlie in *Charlie's Angels*, he was a mysterious voice over the phone. I imagined him as one of those drill sergeants in an old war movie, dispensing the gruff advice that would see his rookies through their grueling ordeal. Much of which, we know, would consist of waiting for that encounter with destiny.

Which can take a while. There aren't many gun-license applications each year (between one and two thousand), but when it comes to processing them, the city that never sleeps, dozes off. The applicant just has to wait, hoping that his home can be a castle even without a cannon. And if the Grandson of Sam came crashing through the door? Well, a friend of mine recently managed to frighten away an intruder from his apartment, but he had a loud voice, a sand wedge, and, crucially, a cowardly burglar. Would I be so lucky? A lifetime of avoiding hand-to-hand combat would mean that any brawl would be likely to turn out badly. The only weapons in my place were kitchen utensils, a Swiss Army knife, and, perhaps, a very heavy book.

■

Finding somewhere to buy a gun legally in Manhattan is like looking for a liquor store in Saudi Arabia.

■

The weeks passed, safely, but without any word from Police Headquarters. Finally, after five months, a letter arrived. I had to contact the License Division within "five days of receipt" to fix up an interview in, you guessed it, Room 110. "Failure to respond and/or comply with this notice will result in disapproval of your application." Away on vacation? That, probably, would be too bad. Do not pass Go, do not collect handgun.

The interview is to be taken seriously. This is not just a quick check for drool on the chin or blood on the hands. The police want to be sure that the would-be gun owner knows the law, and they might, warned pistol consultant Larry, try to trip me up. Try they did. The interviewing officer was courteous, friendly even, but it didn't stop him from asking whether I would be taking my gun to the target range every weekend once I received my premises residence license (with target endorsement). It was a trick. As, fortunately, I remembered, holders of such permits can take their guns to the range only twice a month (unloaded, in a locked box). At the end of the interview, there is little clue as to how you have done ("That's to avoid incidents," explained Larry). Next, two more officers have to review the case.

Which they did for another three months. Then, finally, the great day arrived, if not the permit. I had been approved, but the permit has to be picked up in person at Police Headquarters in, for variety, Room 152. Neglect to claim the permit within 30 days and it will be canceled, and the applicant is back to square one, Room 110. With the permit comes a handgun-purchase authorization. This entitles the holder to purchase a gun from another licensee, a licensed dealer, a policeman, or, so long as the deceased held a valid license, a corpse. Fail to buy a gun within 30 days, and the authorization is canceled, along with the pistol license that it took eight months to obtain.

Finding somewhere to buy a gun legally in Manhattan is not much less challenging than looking for a liquor store in Saudi Arabia. Early negotiations with a fellow called "Chop" in a Midtown outlet didn't work out, but a trip to New York Ironworks hit, so to speak, the target. It's a store where the NYPD crowd goes to buy weapons, extra equipment, and fashion essentials such as "Frisk 'Em" gloves. It is also just around the corner from Police Headquarters, which matters, because that is where, for the fourth time in this process, the new gun owner has to return. Within 72 hours and packing heat (so long as the heat is unloaded and in a locked box). It's a quick pass through the metal detectors (yes, they do work) and then back to Room 152 (so long as it's Monday to Friday, between the hours of noon and 2 P.M.). The pistol will be poked and prodded, and the bill of sale perused. Survive this and the process is complete. The gun can be kept at home. So there it sits, gripped by its newly mandatory trigger lock, a last line of defense.

For the time being anyway. The pistol license, of course, is issued subject to certain conditions. And the first of these, listed right at the top of the Police Department's little handbook for licensees? The license "is revocable at any time." **NR**

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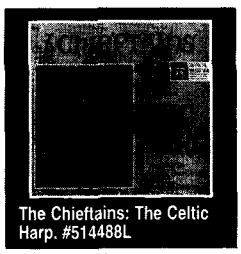

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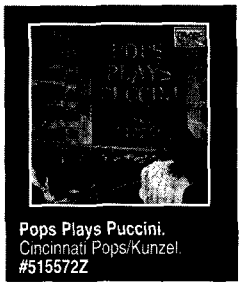

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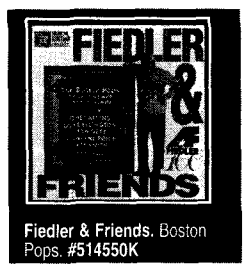

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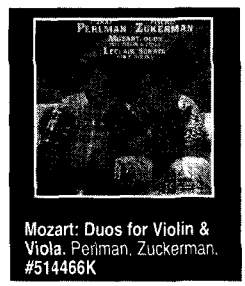

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■ COVER STORY ■

The Duel

Bush and McCain in the snow

RICHARD LOWRY

Nashua, N.H.

MORE than a thousand sign-waving people are packed into a building the size of an airplane hangar in Milford, jazzed by The Bellamy Brothers' warm-up act, waiting for the main event. First, George W. Bush's siblings—and Elizabeth Dole, an honorary family member at least through the early primaries—take the huge stage. Then W. himself is introduced, and sidles up to the mike. "I'm a lucky man," he announces. "I've got a great wife! I've got a lot of great friends! Elizabeth Dole is a great friend of mine!" Then, his voice rising even higher, he introduces "two fabulous Americans, *my mother and my father*!"

Barbara and George take the stage to wild applause, people standing on their chairs to get a better look. The former president gives brief remarks, concluding, "This boy, this *son* of ours, is not going to let you down!" Then W. takes the mike again, gazes out over the cheering throng, and pronounces: "Thank y'all for coming!" So, one of the largest gatherings of the run-up to the New Hampshire primary is quickly dismissed, without getting the slightest indication that W.'s campaign is about anything more than the latest Bush family promotion.

Just 40 minutes away in Derry, John McCain is holding his 113th town-hall meeting at a boys'-and-girls' club, in a plain room with two bingo scoreboards on the walls. No entertainment, no endorsers on the stage—just McCain standing in front of a large American flag stretched behind him like the one in the movie *Patton*. But people are standing against the walls, squatting in the aisles, straining to see in back. There's an insurrectionary feel to the event, even in the overflowing parking lot outside where a Humvee sports hand-painted "Veterans for McCain" signs and a tiny beat-up camper is a makeshift McCain information center, serving "Free Hot Chocolate."

Bush and McCain fought a duel of contrasting personal styles, campaign strategies, and political philosophies in New Hampshire. Bush settled for trying—ineffectually, it turned out—to grind McCain down with a well-financed, disciplined campaign geared to Republican regulars. At times, given his relatively light schedule in the days before the primary, he didn't even seem to try too hard. McCain, on the other hand, was radicalized by his relentless grass-roots stumping, until he had pushed himself farther and farther outside the Republican party and conservative orthodoxy. Bush must hope that the price of McCain's stunning victory here is that he became too "New Hampshire"—too geared to independents, too contrary on basic GOP issues—to win in places like South Carolina. But important aspects of his candidacy will undoubtedly translate elsewhere, and Bush would be wise to learn from them.

Most Bush events weren't as content-free as his appearance with his dad. W. warmed to his tax fight with McCain, arguing not only that tax cuts would stimulate growth, but that as much of the surplus as possible should be returned to the taxpayer as a matter of justice. At a Lincoln Day dinner in Keene, Bush attributed the supposed unpopularity of tax cuts to "a president over the last seven years who's said you can't have a tax cut because there will be no Medicare check, or Social Security won't be sound." Left implicit was that McCain says the same thing.

As important as the message in this case was Bush's venue, a Best Western meeting room packed with 300 or so party activists. From the spirited Pledge of Allegiance to the wan lettuce of the dinner salads, it was unmistakably a party event, and for that reason it was hard to imagine McCain there. Bush's top New Hampshire supporter, Sen. Judd Gregg, explicitly picked up on the idea, confiding to the crowd in a hushed, serious voice: "This bothers me: One of the other candidates in this race said they going to meet with 'voters' and not the Republican party."

Sometimes Bush's New Hampshire message seemed to boil down to: "A Republican for the Republican party." That it generated any enthusiasm at all isn't a tribute to his rhetorical skill—even as Bush's speaking style improves, he

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The Golan Heights

To Whom Do They Belong? Can Israel Survive Without Them?

Syria's president, Hafez Assad, has apparently "consented to discuss peace" with Israel's Prime Minister Ehud Barak, provided that Mr. Barak agrees to start negotiations where (allegedly) the late Prime Minister Rabin left off four years ago. Astonishingly and regrettably, Mr Barak seems to have agreed to this presumptuous imposition.

What are the facts?

Historical Background—The Golan was always part of the Jewish homeland. The Syrian claim to the Golan is tenuous. Syria, as a political entity, did not exist at all until after the first World War. Until then it was just another province in the Ottoman empire, with ill-defined borders. In 1923, in an Anglo/French great-power play, the border between Syria and what was then called Palestine was established. The Golan Heights were ceded to Syria.

Even before the establishment of Israel in 1948, the Syrians, having heavily fortified the area, subjected the villages in northern Israel to almost daily shellings, making normal life impossible. In the 1967 Six-Day War, Syria attacked Israel and was defeated. Israel occupied the Golan Heights and in 1981, for all practical purposes annexed them.

Syria and its President—Syria is the most destabilizing influence in the Middle East. It is classified by the U.S. State Department as a narcotics-dealing and terrorist state. Its main fury is directed against Israel, which is perceived as a bulwark of Western influence and civilization, both of which Syria totally rejects.

Syria's President, Hafez Assad, is a tyrant, every bit as ruthless and cunning as his Iraqi counterpart, Saddam Hussein. Under Assad, Syria is a world center for terrorism. It still harbors Nazi bigwigs, who found welcome there after the World War. Few doubt that he was the mastermind and final authority in the suicide attack on the Marine barracks in Beirut in which 241 Americans died, and in the explosion of Pan Am flight #103 in which 270 people lost their lives. He oversees one of the largest narcotics operations in the world.

Military Security—The Golan is the size of the New York borough of Queens, about 10 miles wide, with a plateau on either side of a ridge. If it were part of Syria it would be less than 1% of its territory. But it is of a supreme strategic importance to Israel. Its high ground provides early-warning capability, without which Israel–just as in 1948, in 1967, and in 1973–would be subject to surprise attack by the Syrians. Its loss would obligate Israel to stay on constant alert and to maintain a state of readiness and mobilization that would be economically and socially untenable. The Golan, which ranges up to a height of 2300 ft., dominates the Jordan Valley, the lowest point on earth about 700 ft. below sea level. On the Golan itself, there are only two natural terrain bottlenecks through which tanks can advance. Those choke points are defensible and made possible the repulse of 1400 Syrian tanks that attacked Israel in the 1973 war. But with the Golan in Syrian hands, and without the radar installations that would give Israel warning of any military movements, thousands of tanks–backed up by missiles and airplanes–could overrun Israel in a matter of hours. It would be a strategically impossible situation, especially for a country as small as Israel–smaller than Lake Michigan, smaller by half than San Bernardino County in California. The Golan does not make for perfect defense, but it gives Israel a small breathing space for mobilization.

> "With the Golan in Israeli hands, attacking Arabs could be confident of defeat and peace would be preserved. To hand the Golan to Syria is a prescription for war and for Israel's destruction."

The Golan is the source of over one-third of Israel's fresh water. In 1964, with the Golan in Syrian hands, Syria attempted to divert these headwaters and to cripple Israel's water supply. It is more than likely that, given another opportunity, Syria would once again attempt to destroy Israel's water supply.

In its keen desire to bring peace to its people, after more than fifty years of war and bloodshed, Israel has been prepared to make far-reaching concessions to Syria on the Golan, in exchange for real peace. But it is hoped that even Ehud Barak, Israel's recently-elected prime minister, will not be prepared to give up all of the Golan high ground and to return to the "death trap" borders of 1967, or anything close to them. In order to survive within such borders, Israel would have to rely on the goodwill of the Arab states, most of which—with the recent exception of Jordan and of the cold peace with Egypt—are still in a declared or undeclared state of war with Israel. An aggressor will attack only if confident of victory. With the Golan in Israeli hands, attacking Arabs could be confident of defeat and peace would be preserved. To hand the Golan to Syria is a prescription for war and for Israel's destruction.

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inevitably muffs a handful of lines in every speech—but to the GOP's hunger for a candidate who can do one thing: win. This is a thin basis for a candidacy, and one that Bush could see transfer to McCain if he doesn't recover in South Carolina and elsewhere.

At least Bush won't lose his likability. After speeches, he steps off the stage and disappears for hours into crowds of well-wishers. At a Portsmouth breakfast attended by nearly 1,000, Bush's aides set up a system so that Bush could kiss, kid, grip, and pose with hundreds of people, one by one, before they were ushered smoothly toward the exit. At a Hudson high school, dozens of people waited about an hour by a gym door to catch Bush leaving after he had finished clutching people inside, but were told to give up—it would be another 40 minutes—and see him inside. They rushed back into the gym, and the loose scrum of people around the candidate swelled again.

McCain's crowds were obviously excited about their candidate, too, but there was something deeper at work. McCain improbably claims that his presidency would reinvigorate American self-government—yet he seems to have done exactly that here, on a small scale. There was a good-natured earnestness in the air at his town-hall meetings, a feeling that

Bush would also do well to note how anti-Clinton McCain's message is. 'I'll be glad to beat up on Clinton,' the senator said.

whatever was about to be said really *mattered*. Even after an hour of questioning, when McCain had to go, there were still hands in the air. When a little boy asked a question about NASA at Nashua's town hall—nicely symbolizing McCain's pledge to engage the young in public life—an older man thought aloud to himself, "Oh, that's wonderful."

New Hampshire forged McCain's candidacy, much as it did Pat Buchanan's in 1992. A large part of the New Hampshire appeal of both McCain and Buchanan was their reputation for truth-telling, their patriotism, their anti–special-interest rhetoric, and their populist willingness to consider government solutions to the problems they heard about on the campaign trail: in Buchanan's case unemployment, in McCain's "soft" issues such as health care and prescription drugs. After 1992, Buchanan represented a strange amalgam of positions that didn't entirely hang together. McCain is in a similar state, making for the oddest of creatures: a conviction politician with no clear convictions.

McCain still calls himself a conservative Republican. But at his town-hall meetings, he regularly revealed a progressive's tendency to defer to experts and studies. His distaste for political parties is part of this impulse (the soft money he excoriates, of course, mainly benefits the parties). At other times, McCain seemed to tend toward frank statism, as in his stock line that he has "yet to understand why it is you and I can drive to Canada and get these [prescription] drugs for half the price we can in the United States." Uh, it might be the price controls, Senator.

McCain contends that only "big-money interests" have kept Congress from passing health-care reform. Maybe. But, in McCain's world, "big money" is supposedly responsible for the polarized state of the nation's abortion debate too. Is there nothing it isn't responsible for? Sometimes one issue, by the slow force of its logic, can move a politician into unexpected places. It happened with Buchanan on trade. It could happen with McCain on campaign finance. He has scored Bush in increasingly harsh terms for defending the current system. If McCain takes his arguments over campaign finance seriously—reform is necessary to accomplish *everything else*—why would he support Bush for president in the fall and not, say, Russell Feingold?

One answer might be that Bush, in theory, also supports campaign-finance reform, which is one of the reasons he hasn't been able to make a principled, First Amendment case against McCain's plan. He would do better to co-opt other, powerful aspects of McCain's candidacy, beginning with its patriotism. McCain talks about Tom Brokaw's book *The Greatest Generation*, and has veterans stand for an appreciative round of applause at his events. It is a basic patriotic appeal that few other politicians bother to make, and helps give McCain's events an irresistible red-white-and-blue coloration.

Bush would also do well to note how anti-Clinton McCain's message is. McCain rips the administration's "feckless, photo-op foreign policy," its fundraising practices, its—in his telling—near treason, its contempt for the military, and its aversion to truth-telling. At the Nashua town-hall meeting, in the course of making an entirely different point, McCain said, as an aside, "I'll be glad to beat up on Bill Clinton"—and was interrupted by applause. By ratcheting up his anti-Clinton rhetoric, Bush might not only solidify his support among Republicans and hit on a Gore weakness, but toughen his image—both Gore and McCain show that it may be the year of the "fighter."

But McCain, in contrast to Gore, has managed to inject levity into his fight. Bush obviously has his light side, but it's mostly kept under wraps. Taking no questions, repeating the same lines, Bush risks seeming similar to his sidekick Liddy Dole, who looks like a colorized high-school girl fresh out of Pleasantville, stunned and scared by the world of 2000. McCain is willing to improvise. At the Nashua event, a guy calling himself "Vermin Supreme" wandered in dressed in a madcap Viking suit, and told reporters he had just been kicked out of a Bush event. McCain briefly invited Vermin on stage—to the delight of the crowd—as an example of the pageantry of American democracy.

Perhaps Bush can make adjustments to pick up some of McCain's atmospherics and themes, but there is of course a limit to how far he can go, because McCain's campaign is so caught up in the candidate's character. Being a war hero makes the patriotism easier, as it does the implicit claim to peerless integrity and even the Clinton bashing. On the other hand, biography has its limits. Bush certainly isn't going to win the nomination on his life story—but coherent policy positions and the support of the party matter, too. John McCain could afford to forget that during his electrifying crusade here. Bush can only hope the rest of the nation is a different story. **NR**

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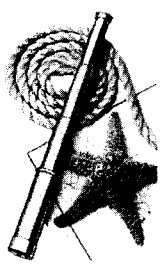

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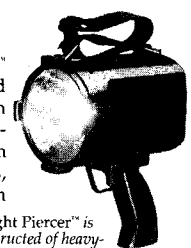

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The Attack Man

What Gore over Bradley means

RAMESH PONNURU

Lebanon, N.H.

DAYS before the New Hampshire primary, the *Concord Monitor* had this to say about Bill Bradley's campaign: "Bradley's mistake, it is now plain, was to couple [his] message with a call for purity in political discourse. This is a noble aim for an ideal world. But the New Hampshire primary is the real world—a world, incidentally, that Gore, who has run once before, knows better than Bradley." Bradley had belatedly tried to go on the attack, but "his distaste for doing so was apparent, and the attacks themselves were stale, half-hearted and general. He borrowed his sharpest words from others." It's not remarkable that the *Monitor* should suggest that Al Gore is good at playing hardball, or that Bradley isn't. What is remarkable is that the Gore campaign itself distributed this editorial to reporters.

Gore has good reason to exult in his own ruthlessness: Democratic primary voters like it. They don't want a nominee who promises, as Bradley does, to refrain from tearing down his opponents, but rather someone who will hammer the Republicans as racists, theocrats, and handmaidens to the rich. This Gore has always gladly done.

At a dinner of the state Democratic party in Nashua, the contrast between the two candidates was stark. Bradley quoted Eleanor Roosevelt: "The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams." He spoke of "moving our collective humanity a few feet forward and making racial unity in this country a reality." He explained that if Americans made more "connections" with one another, they would be "less lonely." He talked about how often he had seen "a neighbor give to a neighbor without expecting anything in return." He appeared to be positioning himself in a race for president of Heaven.

Bradley complained that, in recent years, political campaigns had come to resemble wars. (Where does he think the term "campaign" comes from?) He did touch on the Clinton-Gore campaign-finance abuses of 1996, but daintily, without suggesting that Gore had done anything seriously wrong. In keeping with his "new kind of politics," he did not deign to ask anyone to vote for him.

Gore, on the other hand, hit every note in the party songbook. Even now, he is denouncing the "Reagan tax scheme." He praised the Democratic tax hike of 1993, attributing the current boom to that and his party's other policies. He took every opportunity to bash George W. Bush, and was far from analytically fastidious. Texas, he said, leads the nation in pollution; he did not pause to note that a state as big as Texas will lead the nation in a lot of things.

The vice president took shots at Bradley's health-care plan, too. He used to say that Bradley's health vouchers were "capped" at $150 a month, too low for many localities. This was untrue—$150 was an average, not a cap—and Bradley called Gore on it. So now Gore says that the vouchers are "capped at $150 a month or averaged at $150 a month, however you want to say it." He thus not only pretends that two contradictory concepts are in fact the same, but also implies that Bradley is being evasive by denying this.

Gore concluded his speech with his usual call to the ramparts: "I'm ready to fight . . . and I ask you to fight for me." The Democrats want a fighter, even a slasher. The idealistic party that Bradley wants to lead no longer exists, because the country in which that party could succeed no longer exists. Bradley argues that the Democrats should return to the tradition of FDR and LBJ: dreaming big dreams with other people's money. But any such course would be political suicide. Active Democrats know that today's liberalism survives by camouflage and trimming; by distributing luxuries to the middle class, not alms to the poor; by tearing down conservatives.

Bradley's critique of Clinton and Gore is that they have destroyed the party's conscience; his downfall is that his critique is true. If baseness is the price of victory, it is one Democrats will happily pay, with Gore as with Clinton. Bradley seems to *want* to lose virtuously. The characteristic sound of his campaign is the sigh, the counterpart to Gore's forced laugh.

Bradley's critique of Clinton/Gore is that they have destroyed their party's conscience; his downfall is that his critique is true.

Dispatching Bradley will leave Gore strong, but bruised. He will not easily rally Bradley supporters for November. The Democrats are alive to the dangers of disunity: At the dinner, Kathy Sullivan, chairman of the New Hampshire party, quoted Jesse Jackson to the effect that the primary race was supposed "to make us better, not bitter." Also, Gore will have to cope with a reputation as a hatchet man that won't go down as smoothly with swing voters as with Democratic partisans.

Already, the press is beginning to pick at Gore's record of lies. The weekend before the primary, the *Boston Globe* reported that aides in his first presidential run, in 1988, had written memos warning against his penchant for "exaggeration" and "remarks that may be impossible to back up." The latest such remarks concern abortion. In his zeal to out-abort Bradley, Gore has been claiming to have been a consistent pro-choicer—indeed, to have "always been attacked by the anti-choice groups for that position since the beginning of my career."

Inconveniently, the leading "anti-choice group" gave Gore high marks during his years in the House: He had an 84 percent pro-life voting record. He voted for a measure declaring that there was no constitutional right to abortion. (Gore also claims to have always supported *Roe* v. *Wade*.) If they dig deeper, reporters will find even more Gore fibbing on abortion. In 1997, Gore claimed to have met with anti-

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abortion leaders four years earlier. He had, he said, wanted to find common ground, but was rebuffed. On hearing these remarks, Douglas Johnson, head of the National Right to Life Committee, told NR that neither he nor anyone he contacted from more than 40 allied organizations had ever heard of this alleged meeting. The public may not turn against Gore because of "Clinton fatigue," but "lie fatigue" is another matter.

Gore's other abortion problem is that his zeal for federal funding of it is not shared by the public. Republicans are too timid to raise the issue themselves, but they could use it to respond when he accuses them of anti-abortion extremism. The primaries have left Gore positioned too far left on other issues as well. Clinton's State of the Union proposal for licensing new gun owners will bring more NRA voters to the polls than soccer moms, especially in the South and Rocky Mountain West. And with school vouchers increasingly popular, Gore can't benefit from making an attack on them central to his education platform.

Gore's environmentalism, too, remains a fat target. He blames global warming for "some of the really unusual weather" we've had lately. He still maintains that fighting global warming will create jobs. (We'll all get rich cleaning up after one another.) And consider this comment from the vice president at a town meeting in Lebanon, N.H.: "I wrote in this book *Earth in the Balance* that we should set as a strategic goal the phasing out of the internal-combustion engine over a 25-year period. I accept now that was a mistake. Twenty-five years is far too long for a goal like that. I think we can do it quicker."

Gore clearly has a bad case of program-itis. When a girl at the town meeting asked him what he would do to prevent future Columbines, he was off to the races. Under the rubric of facilitating "better parenting," he quickly moved to: raising the minimum wage; expanding the earned-income credit; establishing after-school programs; liberalizing family-leave policies; and reducing the marriage penalty. Beyond that, he would enact a series of gun controls, hire more school psychiatrists and

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counselors, and shrink classes and schools. He asked his questioner whether she had any other ideas. "No," replied the stunned girl, to general laughter. Gore then started talking about something called "peer remediation."

The programs add up to a quite expensive platform. Gore is calculating that the politics of an era of surpluses favors lavish spending. He may be right about that. But he risks looking the technocrat. He opened the discussion in Lebanon by saying, "I'm proud to be part of an administrative team that has transformed a big deficit into big surpluses." If voters are searching for a head administrator of the federal bureaucracy, they've found their man.

Gore's fans say that the campaign has loosened him up; but the impression he gives is of someone who's been told to be more demonstrative and is therefore moving his head and arms around for no reason. It's as though a machine has been set to "loose." The campaign's attempts to show Gore's sense of humor have proven only that it is no laughing matter. But the problem with the Gore persona is not, in fact, that he is boring or stiff. The public may want a little stolidity after the Clinton carnival. The problem, rather, is arrogance and condescension. Voters may just never take to Gore.

Republicans had better hope they don't. For all Gore's weaknesses, he will emerge from the primaries a formidable candidate in other respects. He has incumbency, peace, and prosperity on his side. The issues, from the patients' bill of rights to the minimum wage, do favor him. And, of course, he is a tough and vicious campaigner. Smart Republican strategists are trying to figure out how to start discrediting his campaign tactics now, so as to inoculate the Republican nominee against them in the fall—and especially to inhibit him from playing his favorite card: race. If they're not careful, what's happening to Bradley could happen to them, too. **NR**

The Saga of Steve

Forbes in his second try

KATE O'BEIRNE

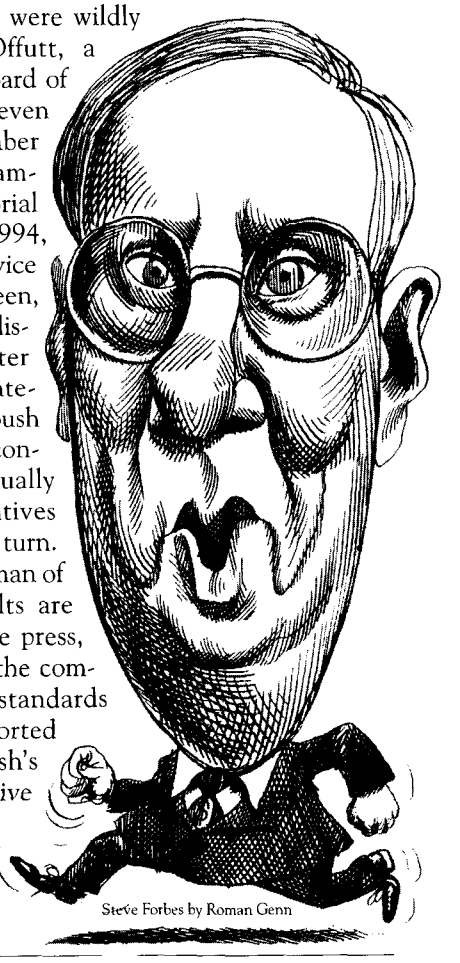
Nashua, N.H.

"HE'S much better looking in person," volunteers a waitress at the Nashua Marriott, where Steve Forbes is staying. She is looking at a Forbes ad on the TV hanging above the hotel's Sunday-morning breakfast crowd. Indeed, Forbes isn't a candidate ideally suited to TV, but up close and in person he projects an appealing sincerity and resilience. Following his strong second-place finish in Iowa, Forbes arrived here fighting to emerge as the conservative challenger who would—with a little help from John McCain—disrupt the tide of inevitability carrying George W. Bush to the nomination. McCain's victory will breathe some life into that scenario, and Forbes will pivot to take on him, too, as the candidates head to South Carolina and Arizona. Forbes will continue to assail his opponents as the "timid twins" on tax cuts.

Despite the grueling schedule—days typically began at 8 A.M. and didn't end until 10 P.M.—and the icy weather, Forbes seemed to enjoy his New Hampshire foray. In the campaign's final days, the *New York Times* reported that Gov. Bush felt homesick for his own bed and familiar routines in Austin. Forbes, in contrast, gave no sign of missing the comfortable life (probably more comfortable than Bush's) he abandoned—four years ago!—to take his crusade on the road. When Forbes reaches the spot in his stump speech where he has a mock stumble over "the Infernal—I mean Internal—Revenue Service," he unfailingly giggles along with the audience. Forbes may be an unlikely and awkward warrior, but there is no doubt that he is a happy one.

And principled too. At every campaign stop in New Hampshire, he patiently outlined his policy proposals—clearly the product of a coherent worldview—on tax reform, health care, Social Security, education, and defense. He reminded his GOP audiences of what the party should have learned from its 1996 loss: "With no message, there is no victory." A ghost of 1996 arrived in the Granite State when Jack Kemp flew in to endorse Bush. If Forbes was dismayed by his old friend's surprise announcement, he didn't show it. He explained that Kemp "is part of the political establishment," and "they know now that Bush is in danger."

If Forbes isn't exactly threatening the establishment, he is certainly irritating it. He is the only one of Bush's GOP opponents to discuss the governor's Texas record. Two of Bush's home-state critics joined Forbes at a press conference in Manchester to contend that Bush's claims about the success of his education reform were wildly exaggerated. Robert Offutt, a member of the Texas Board of Education for the past seven years, and former member Donna Ballard, who campaigned with gubernatorial candidate Bush in 1994, explained that their service with the governor had been, in Offutt's words, "one disappointing surprise after another." In a joint statement, they declared: "[Bush is] selling himself as a conservative, when he actually has fought conservatives tooth and nail at every turn. He's selling himself as a man of results, when the results are very disappointing." The press, having little interest in the complexities of education standards and accountability, reported the criticisms, and Bush's defense, as an inconclusive "he said, they said" exchange, in which the truth could not be determined.



Steve Forbes by Roman Genn

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It's not just the press that isn't interested in criticisms of Bush's Texas record. Many conservatives, too, prefer to avert their eyes lest anything disturb their belief that W. will put an end to the Clinton-Gore years. And Bush has made himself acceptable to the Right—in Iowa, he won a plurality of conservative votes. After McCain's win, he's likely to become even more acceptable to many South Carolina conservatives.

Forbes attributes this support to the frontrunner's false advertising. "It is a classic case of using rhetoric to try to cloak a very unconservative agenda," he declares. He points out that Bush makes only "vague references to Social Security, and has no plan on health care." On the issue of abortion, Forbes says, Bush is "doing a ballet dance in cowboy boots."

Although Forbes enjoys the support of many former members of New Hampshire's Buchanan Brigade, his brand of populism—unlike Pat's—isn't angry or resentful. Forbes's ads in the final days of the campaign all touted his own agenda and his pro-life stand on abortion. His spots were more positive than an ad from the liberal Republican Leadership Council featuring Bob Dole bitterly blaming Forbes's 1996 attacks for leaving him too "battered, bruised, and broke" to win in November.

Forbes supporters attribute that loss instead to a weak candidate carried over the finish line for the GOP nomination by the party establishment; this view makes the Forbes backers resist the talk of "inevitability" that has many of their conservative friends backing Bush.

Like Buchanan in 1996, Forbes concentrated on reaching his core New Hampshire audience through scores of radio interviews. But at one of his few live rallies, in Nashua two days before the primary, about 300 supporters enthusiastically agreed with the Portsmouth resident who introduced Forbes by declaring, "I've chosen to fight the good fight, for a good man who talks straight." There's no doubt about any of the premises of that formulation. Catching a tailwind courtesy of John McCain, a beaming Forbes included a strong pinch of anti-Washington rhetoric in his appeal. "PACs, and power-brokers, and the Republican establishment have met their match," he told the cheering crowd. "They don't have their hooks in me. I don't need contributions from K Street."

Forbes advisers argue that only their candidate or George W. Bush can win the nomination. They believe John McCain is out of step with the party's conservative base and lacks the organization and resources to compete for very long after New Hampshire. As for Bush, the Forbes camp doubts that he has the toughness Forbes has demonstrated over four years of campaigning. "Oh, my goodness," Forbes says, in a typical turn of phrase, "wait until Gore and his supporters start to work on him. 'Hey guys, wait until the pros start to show you what a heavyweight match is like.'"

Forbes recounts that at a Republican dinner in Philadelphia last year, he "couldn't resist reminding them of the last time a convention in Philadelphia made the mistake of nominating a big-state governor who looked good in the polls." That was Tom Dewey. In 1948, Truman proved the headline writers wrong. If Forbes's warnings are correct, the Democrats might end up with the last laugh this year as well. **NR**

A Success to Trumpet, and Protect

Welfare reform and its discontents

STEPHEN MOORE

THE results are in: Welfare reform is one of the greatest public-policy successes of modern times. There are now only half as many families on welfare as there were in 1994. Some states, led by innovative GOP governors, have shrunk their rolls by more than 80 percent. And almost everyone now agrees that the former welfare recipients have moved upward into the labor force, not downward into bleaker poverty. According to the *New York Times*, "the most comprehensive study of the new system says more and more [ex-welfare mothers] are going to work."

Conservatives should trumpet these accomplishments. We should say (adapting a phrase from James Carville) that we were right, and that our opponents were wrong.

How wrong? Recall the welfare-reform debate of 1995–96. Welfare advocates jeered at conservatives who were trying to fix the system. *The Nation* editorialized: "The welfare bill will destroy America's state of grace. In its place will come massive and deadly poverty, sickness and all manners of violence." That's not all. "People will die, businesses will close, infant mortality will soar." Rep. John Lewis of Georgia compared welfare reformers to Nazis, quoting Martin Niemoeller—"In Germany . . . they came for the Jews and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew. Then they came for the trade unionists and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a trade unionist"—and then bellowing: "Read the Republican Contract. They are coming for the children. They are coming for the poor. They are coming for the sick, the elderly, and the disabled." The anti-reform movement, led by groups like the Children's Defense Fund, forecast disaster—repeatedly and loudly.

But no disaster ever came. Incentive-based reform measures—such as work requirements, time limits for welfare, no extra payments for having more children, and aggressive job-placement efforts—appear to be having exactly the desired effect.

For almost three decades, the real-world impact of welfare confirmed what any sensible behavioral psychologist would have predicted from the outset: If you pay unwed teenage girls to have babies, they will have babies. If you say that a welfare check is an adequate substitute for a father's paycheck, then fathers will be expendable, and fewer fathers will stick around. And if you tell people that the checks that sustain them will keep arriving—unless and until someone in the household starts working and bringing in income—no one in the household will work.

Mr. Moore is director of fiscal policy studies at the Cato Institute.

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Furthermore, even though welfare had always been sold to the public as a "temporary" safety net for the needy, by the end of the 1980s the average welfare recipient was staying on the rolls for twelve years.

In the early 1990s, some states launched elaborate systems of penalties and rewards in order to encourage welfare recipients to leave public assistance and engage in more productive activities—work, school, or training. Wisconsin governor Tommy Thompson mandated that all able-bodied welfare recipients work in order to receive benefits. In 1987, the number of welfare households in Wisconsin was about 100,000. Now it is *below 10,000*.

Many other states tried similar experiments. But it wasn't until the federal reform laws were enacted by the Republican Congress and signed into law by Bill Clinton (after two vetoes) that the national welfare system was reconstructed. This reform bill included all the provisions that the welfare lobby had vigorously opposed: work requirements, time limits, and a green light for state-level reforms. When Clinton signed the bill, Children's Defense Fund president Marian Wright Edelman castigated him for approving "the biggest betrayal of children and the poor since the CDF began."

For the first time in almost two generations, though, even most congressional Democrats had to concede that a major pillar of the New Deal/Great Society structure had failed. The initial success rate of welfare reform further exposes just how flawed the Great Society programs really were.

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The initial success rate of welfare reform further exposes just how flawed the Great Society programs were.

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So where do conservatives go from here? First, we have to recognize that a lot of work remains to be done on welfare reform. Despite the encouraging trends, there are still 7 million people with an umbilical cord to the welfare state. How do we get this hard core off welfare and into the workforce?

The same crowd that opposed welfare reform in the first place (Bill Bradley is one of them) now argues that to end welfare for hard-core recipients, taxpayers will have to ante up a lot more money. The Democratic pro-welfare counter-offensive is based on a politically clever pro-children theme. Liberals are designing a new welfare state that looks suspiciously like the one Congress voted just a few years ago to get rid of; this time, their selling point is that welfare is not for the parents but for the kids—who, after all, can't possibly be held responsible for their parents' refusal or inability to work.

"Compassionate conservatives" will find it hard to resist this fluff. So we could end up with free medical care, free day care, free pre-school, and so on, for children. Bill Bradley's health program would cost at least $60 billion a year—a price even Al Gore attacks as excessive.

Under this new welfare regime, the mother would be responsible for taking care of herself, but the federal government would bear the cost of just about every expense of raising her children. And this would put us right back where we started: with fathers being superfluous. It is important to remember that almost no two-parent families in America need government-subsidized health care, day care, pre-school, etc. The Census Bureau data are so clear on this point that it is beyond dispute: The best antidote to poverty is to keep father and mother together. But these new federal programs are de facto designed for families without fathers.

Charles Murray, whose 1984 classic *Losing Ground* inspired so much of the GOP welfare-reform effort, has correctly noted that ultimately, the test of welfare reform's success is whether the illegitimacy rate falls. If the percentage of children raised in a healthy family environment rises, we will have succeeded; if not, the cost savings will be mostly irrelevant, since the tragic social costs of the welfare state—largely borne by children—will remain. It's still too early to tell, but the initial signs are modestly encouraging—especially for teens. Out-of-wedlock birth rates have fallen slightly in recent years, with big declines among African-American women. But surely, creating a vast arsenal of means-tested children's programs would reintroduce the harmful incentives we have been trying to eradicate.

The best evidence we have suggests that the chief impediment to pushing hard-core welfare recipients into the workforce is that the value of benefits still remains very generous, relative to the economic return from working. That is to say, many of those on welfare today are simply making a rational economic decision: It's more financially rewarding not to get a job.

The perverse behavioral incentives erected by the welfare state remain much more of an obstacle to work than most analysts acknowledge. In 1995, my Cato Institute colleague Michael Tanner and I documented that in most states the full array of welfare programs—AFDC, food stamps, Medicaid, public housing, etc.—paid better than the after-tax payment from working in most starter jobs. In high-benefit states like New York, the value of the full package of welfare benefits can still reach $12 an hour, more than many entry-level salaries.

Our latest analysis finds that the higher the value of welfare in a state, the lower the declines in welfare caseloads. Hawaii, which offers the most generous welfare benefits of any state, totaling over $30,000 a year, has recorded the smallest caseload reduction in the nation. Conversely, Mississippi—whose welfare package comes to less than $11,000 a year—reduced its welfare rolls by 70 percent.

Fortunately, welfare-reform measures enacted at the federal and state levels have made work more financially rewarding. According to Ron Haskins of the House Ways and Means Committee, in the 1980s a typical welfare mother who went to work full-time figured to gain only about $3,000 in extra income from her efforts. Today, that same mother would gain $9,000.

The second round of welfare reform should achieve two goals: an increase in the rewards for work, and a decrease in the rewards of welfare. Work is the key. For all its faults, the one income-support program that has the fewest perverse effects is the Earned Income Tax Credit. The EITC provides working families with a livable income, by supplementing wages with a government subsidy. American taxpayers hate welfare, but they

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do want those who work 40 hours a week to have an income that provides them with all the necessities of life: health care, food, housing, etc.

The EITC is designed roughly along the lines of Milton Friedman's negative income tax. It has two big advantages over every other welfare program: First, the recipient gets a payment *only* by working. Second, there is no need for a vast and self-serving welfare bureaucracy (though we need to do a better job of weeding out rampant EITC fraud). The EITC is also far superior to the minimum wage, because the EITC does not increase unemployment; EITC payments above the market wage are made by taxpayers, not employers.

Republicans suffered a bout of temporary insanity last year in trying to scale back the EITC to save money. But the ideal welfare reform would dismantle all welfare programs *except* the EITC, and devote the cost savings to making the EITC somewhat more generous. Great care must be taken to reconfigure the tax system so that working families don't face insurmountable tax rates as they leave the EITC range.

The main virtue of this plan is that it would turn the work-disincentive problem of welfare on its head. It would also discourage illegitimacy as a means by which young girls can gain financial independence. Because it guarantees that working families will have the income needed to care for their children, this proposal is the best, and maybe the only, antidote to the expansions of government that Democrats are currently proposing. The plan represents truly constructive—and compassionate—conservatism.

In 1935, the founder of the modern welfare state declared: "Continued dependence on relief induces a spiritual and moral disintegration fundamentally destructive to the national fiber. To dole out relief in this way is to administer a narcotic, a subtle destroyer of the human spirit." The speaker was, of course, Franklin Roosevelt. The tragedy is that it took some 60 years for policymakers in Washington to conclude that he was right.

Republicans deserve high praise for the welfare reform of the 1990s. We may be winning, but we haven't won yet—and if we lose Round II, we will find ourselves right back where we started. **NR**

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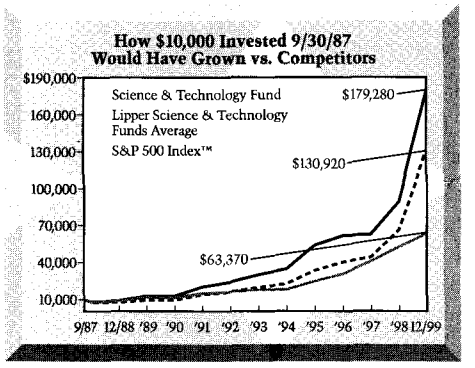

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*Fund inception date: 9/30/87. The fund was also ranked #6 out of 12, #20 out of 31, and #71 out of 99 science and technology funds for the 10-, 5-, and 1-year periods ended 12/31/99, respectively. Among all equity funds, the fund was ranked #6 out of 885; #50 out of 2,770; and #317 out of 7,082 funds for the same respective periods.

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In Muslim America

A presence and a challenge

DANIEL PIPES

An odd controversy briefly dominated the sports pages in March 1996. A player in the National Basketball Association, Mahmoud Abdul-Rauf, refused to follow the league's rule requiring that players stand in a "dignified posture" during the national anthem. Instead, since the beginning of the 1995–96 season, Abdul-Rauf had remained seated during the playing of "The Star-Spangled Banner." A black, 27-year-old former Baptist from Mississippi who had converted to Islam in 1991, he declared that as a Muslim, he could not pay homage to the American flag—which he called a "symbol of oppression, of tyranny." He argued further that the flag directly contradicted his Islamic faith: "This country has a long history of [oppression]. I don't think you can argue the facts. You can't be for God and for oppression. It's clear in the Koran. Islam is the only way."

The NBA responded firmly, suspending Abdul-Rauf until he agreed to obey league rules. He missed one game, then capitulated. Two factors probably weighed most heavily on him: losing a cool $31,707 for each game missed, and facing wide opposition to his decision from other Muslims.

Though soon forgotten, this act of defiance raised important questions. When a successful young man earning almost $3 million a year and enjoying wide adulation talks publicly of hating his own country, something is afoot. What that might be is hinted at by a similar case a whole generation earlier, that of the boxer Muhammad Ali. After his conversion in 1964 to a form of Islam (Elijah Muhammad's Nation of Islam), the former Cassius Clay adopted a set of intensely anti-American attitudes. Most famously, he refused to serve in the U.S. military, which led to the forfeit of his heavyweight title. As Muhammad Ali later put it, he stood against "the entire power structure" in the United States, one he claimed was dominated by Zionists who "are really against the Islam religion."

Stories such as these have given American converts to Islam a reputation for hating their own country. But is this accurate?

Although numbers about religious affiliation in the United States are soft, Americans who have converted to Islam—plus their descendants—probably total about one million. This makes them by far the largest convert population of Muslims in the Western world; but, using the conventional figure of six million Muslims residing in the United States, converts are far outnumbered by immigrants. Of the million, whites number maybe 50,000; the overwhelming majority is black. Given that African Americans constitute a small minority of the U.S. population, this implies that a black person is over 100 times more likely to embrace Islam than is a white person.

Mr. Pipes is director of the Philadelphia-based Middle East Forum and author of three books on Islam.

A convert's attitude toward the United States depends on what form of Islam he adopts. If it is a tolerant and moderate variant, then he probably has mild views. His Islam will be an act of private faith with few political consequences. This moderate spirit is widely found among those (most of them female) who convert because they are marrying a Muslim, and those (most of them white) who convert because they are attracted to the mystical Sufi movement within Islam. The same goes for converts drawn to Islam as an old-fashioned way of life, or for its emphatic monotheism. Clearly, there is nothing inherently antagonistic between the faith of Islam and good American citizenship.

Well-known moderate Muslim converts include Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, the basketball player, who has a positive view of the United States and a constructive attitude towards its problems. Mike Tyson, for all his troubles with the law, has found in Islam a soothing and civilizing influence; Islam, he says, is "going to make me a better person." Robert Crane, a one-time foreign-policy adviser to Richard Nixon and Muslim-convert, holds that the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights were implicitly based on the Islamic principles of equality and justice for all. He concludes from this that the United States and Islam are totally compatible: "To be the best Muslim is to be a good American, and to be the best American is to be Islamic." In fact, "both paradigms, the overtly Islamic and the traditionalist American, are the same."

But there are often less happy results when a convert adopts one of two specific types of Islam: the Nation of Islam (the black-nationalist sect that originated in Detroit in 1930) or the fundamentalist variety (now usually known as Islamism) imported from the Middle East and South Asia. Converts to these forms of Islam are much more likely to turn anti-American.

From its inception, the Nation of Islam has promoted a black-nationalist outlook hostile to mainstream American culture and politics. "You are not American citizens," Elijah Muhammad, its longtime leader, told his followers. He went to jail for draft evasion instead of enlisting to fight in World War II, and even forbade Nation of Islam members to accept Social Security numbers. Malcolm X, his most famous disciple, contrasted the pure evil of America with the pure good of Islam, saying that an American passport "signifies the exact opposite of what Islam stands for." Continuing in this spirit, the group's current leader, Louis Farrakhan, threatened some years ago to "lead an army of black men and women to Washington, D.C., and we will sit down with the president, whoever he may be, and will negotiate for a separate state or territory of our own." On a 1996 visit to the virulently anti-American regime in Teheran, Farrakhan declared that "God will destroy America at the hands of Muslims."

Many converts eventually leave the Nation of Islam and join mainstream Islam; those of them who become Islamists are especially likely to continue to disassociate themselves from the surrounding culture in a radical way. Even after his break with the Nation of Islam, for example, Malcolm X announced, "I'm not an American." Similarly, the one-time radical H. Rap Brown, now known as Jamil Abdullah Al-Amin, declares, "When we begin to look critically at the Constitution of the United States . . . we see that in its main essence it is diametri-

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cally opposed to what Allah has commanded."

Imam Siraj Wahhaj is considered one of the most respected Muslim leaders in America, and he holds a host of prominent positions (e.g., vice president of the Islamic Society of North America). Yet he not only calls for replacing the U.S. government with a caliphate, but has taken practical steps in this direction. He served as a character witness when Sheikh Abdel Rahman was on trial for—and found guilty of—conspiracy to blow up the United Nations and two other New York City targets. Wahhaj was even listed by the U.S. attorney for New York as one of the "unindicted persons who may be alleged as co-conspirators" in the blind sheikh's case.

Those American converts who went to fight the Soviets in Afghanistan in the 1980s may now be the most extreme in their hatred of the United States. After imbibing the *mujahedin* vision of destroying both superpowers, they vowed to do their part on returning home. As one such man put it to a Pakistani magazine in 1989: "It is the duty of all Muslims to complete the march of jihad until we reach America and liberate her. And I will be a guide for them."

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Americans drawn to Islamism tend to be discontented with their lives or alienated from their society.

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Other converts went further. Clement Rodney Hamptonel, a New Jersey hospital technician, was a wounded veteran of the war in Afghanistan against Russia. He came back to the U.S. and helped set off the February 1993 explosion at the World Trade Center in New York.

White Islamists also typically condemn America for its immorality, consumerism, tolerant social policies, and warm relations with Israel. They talk about "our society's unrelenting greed" and its neglect of the downtrodden. In some cases, they associate with hostile governments. Mohammad Al-Asi, head of the Islamic Educational Center in Washington, D.C., explicitly called on Muslims to vanquish the United States during the Kuwait crisis of 1990 (note how he uses the pronoun "we"): "If the Americans are placing their forces in the Persian Gulf, we should be creating another war front for the Americans in the Muslim world—and specifically where American interests are concentrated. In Egypt, in Turkey, in the Indian subcontinent, just to mention a few. Strike against American interests there."

Why do some converts become so hostile toward their own country? There are two main reasons: personal temperament and the immigrant-Muslim milieu. Americans drawn to Islamism tend to be discontented with their lives or alienated from their society. For them, Islam's reputation as Christianity's historic archrival is an attraction; accepting Muhammad and the Koran offers a protest vehicle that is far larger than themselves and much deeper than politics.

Converts are also influenced by the contempt for America that many immigrant Muslims bring from their homelands. Because accepting Islam is a major step, one that often means breaking with family and friends, the new Muslim typically feels vulnerable and particularly in need of his new community's favor. This weakness makes him susceptible to the views of the immigrants, including their negative outlook on America. The immigrants, to be sure, do appreciate America's economic opportunities and political freedom, but survey research suggests that at least half of them, and usually the more pious among them, despise American politics and ethics. If anything, their firsthand experience in the United States enhances their sense that Christian America has lost its faith and lacks moral strength.

This outlook affects the new convert. Jeffrey Lang, a white professor of mathematics at the University of Kansas, recounts attending a lecture in a San Francisco mosque not long after his conversion. An immigrant medical student concluded his talk with this call to arms: "We must never forget—and this is extremely important—that as Muslims, we are obligated to desire, and when possible to participate in, the overthrow of any non-Islamic government—anywhere in the world—in order to replace it by an Islamic one." Lang protested to the lecturer that if Muslims are obligated to overthrow the U.S. government, accepting Islam is tantamount to an act of political treason. "Yes, that's true," the lecturer blithely responded. Lang candidly admits how, in an effort to win acceptance from his new co-religionists, he became "a passionate denouncer of everything American and a staunch defender of Middle Eastern culture," propagating wild-eyed conspiracy theories about the U.S. government. (He has since moderated his views.)

This kind of ideology presents a great challenge to America. No other body of ideas claims blanket superiority over the culture, customs, laws, and policies of the United States; even the fascist and Marxist-Leninist ideologies dealt only with politics. What is to be done?

The first priority is for journalists, intellectuals, clergy, and specialists to awaken Americans to this still incipient but rapidly growing problem. Once they recognize the danger, the remedy is clear: While acknowledging that turning against one's own country is legal—though acting on this hatred, through sedition or treason, is not—Americans must combat this self-hatred. Because sitting out the national anthem, or defaming the Constitution, falls under the category of protected speech, this will be a task not for law enforcement but for moral suasion; a challenge less for the government than for the citizenry.

Of course, politicians should use their bully pulpits to decry anti-American sentiments—but private institutions will have to take the lead. There's a place for nearly everyone—business executives, union leaders, Hollywood producers, investigative journalists, columnists, scholars and teachers, clergy, moderate Muslims—to debate with the self-hating Americans and the organizations they form. These Americans are using free speech to influence America malignly; others should use free speech to oppose them.

One might think it obvious that life in this country is immeasurably preferable to that in Iran, Sudan, or Afghanistan; but clearly, not everyone realizes it. It is up to those of us who grasp this simple truth to explain it to our fellow citizens. **NR**

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BETHESDA MEDICAL CENTER MENTAL HEALTH CLINIC

Patient: A.G. Jr.
Referred by: No ref.
Insurance: N/A

2/17/96

Patient arrives early, describes symptoms: he's in a high-stress job (though when pressed, patient is vague about the concrete responsibilities of the job). Feels inadequate when compared with his immediate supervisor, who, it seems, is more popular, etc., esp. with the ladies. Has grandiose self-image ("I believe it's my destiny to save the earth") that leads him to make strange cognitive misperceptions ("This afternoon, I made it snow").

Patient talks for one hour straight. Will meet once/week. Prescribe initial course of relaxants.

6/15/96

Patient responding well to feedback therapy and mild relaxants. Seems confident, upbeat, somewhat aggressive. When I suggest taking patient's dosage down, patient becomes quite cutting, accusing me of "trying to take us back to the Stone Age."

Patient seems to have two distinct modes of behavior: sanctimonious/pious/messianic and aggressive/evasive/argumentative.

6/17/96

Patient telephones from his office, demanding $1,000, the "maximum legal individual contribution." When refused, he becomes belligerent. Hard to get the dose exactly right on patient's meds.

7/23/96

Patient talks about the death of his sister, by lung cancer. Recounts in detail her last month. Seems quite upset. Blames tobacco industry for her death.

When Dr. points out that patient himself once grew tobacco, lobbied extensively for the industry, and that, in any case, when a girl such as patient's sister begins smoking at 13—as patient admits happened—perhaps in addition to the "tobacco industry" (note to self: explore poss. that patient is schizophrenic/paranoid) patient should blame his parents for allowing her to start at such a young age.

Patient continues to sob.

1/21/98 – 2/4/99

Patient under enormous pressure at work. Immediate supervisor in some sort of grave danger. Put patient on a course of Relaxo 345mg/day and Wellbutin 600mg/day. Patient demands increased meds. When warned that increasing the dosage will leave patient dull, listless, robotic, patient cries, "Exactly!"

10/15/99

Patient resurfaces, upbeat. Expresses exuberance at something called the "Bradley challenge," and smiles tightly when asked to describe it.

Patient still delusional. Claims to have "invented" modern post-Freudian mental-health techniques. When pointed out that this cannot possibly be so—for one thing, patient would have had to do it at the age of seven—patient becomes abusive. Then, strangely, patient claims never to have said what doctor clearly heard him say.

The discussion turns semantic.

12/30/99

Patient obsessed with a "need to win." When asked to define "winning," patient recasts his facial expression into a placid smile and replies, "to help people, to serve my country, to continue the great wave of prosperity that has lifted up this nation." When asked what the consequences of failure are, patient replies that life as we know it will end on the planet. And that a woman's right to choose will be abridged. Doctor cautions patient against messianic attitude. Suggests that "winning" might also be defined as doing one's best in an honorable and truthful way.

Patient accuses doctor of "going negative" and accuses him of misdiagnosing a patient 17 years ago. While it is true that 17 years ago, doctor did indeed have a patient under care who had complicated symptoms that required longer than usual to diagnose, doctor did not "misdiagnose him." Doctor asks if patient has been doing research into doctor's background. Patient responds by accusing doctor of misdiagnosing a patient 17 years ago. Doctor asks if patient believes that distorting the past serves any real purpose. Patient responds by accusing doctor of misdiagnosing a patient 17 years ago. To everything doctor says ("How is the family?" "Would you like a glass of water?"), patient replies by accusing doctor of misdiagnosing a patient 17 years ago.

This goes on for the remainder of the session.

1/31/00

Patient unable to make appointment in person. Calls from somewhere in New Hampshire.

Am extremely concerned that the requirements of patient's job are causing fissures in his cognition/reality awareness. Patient friendly, outgoing, no trace of belligerence or aggression.

Must conclude that patient may never achieve state of complete mental health. While he will always be functional, he may never be fully stable.

Course of action: reduce meds. Observe closely.

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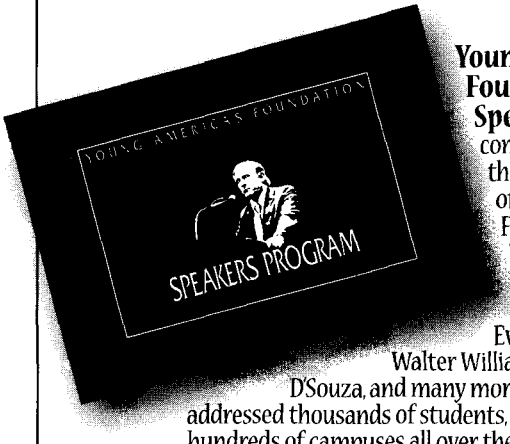

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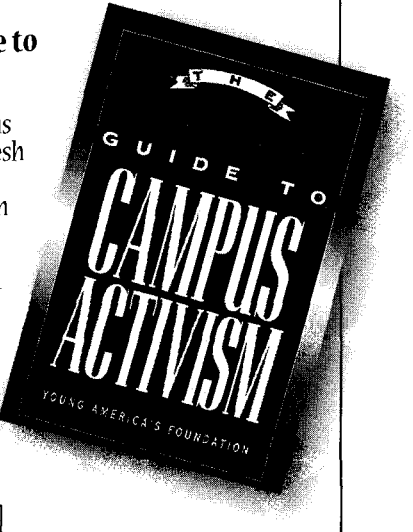

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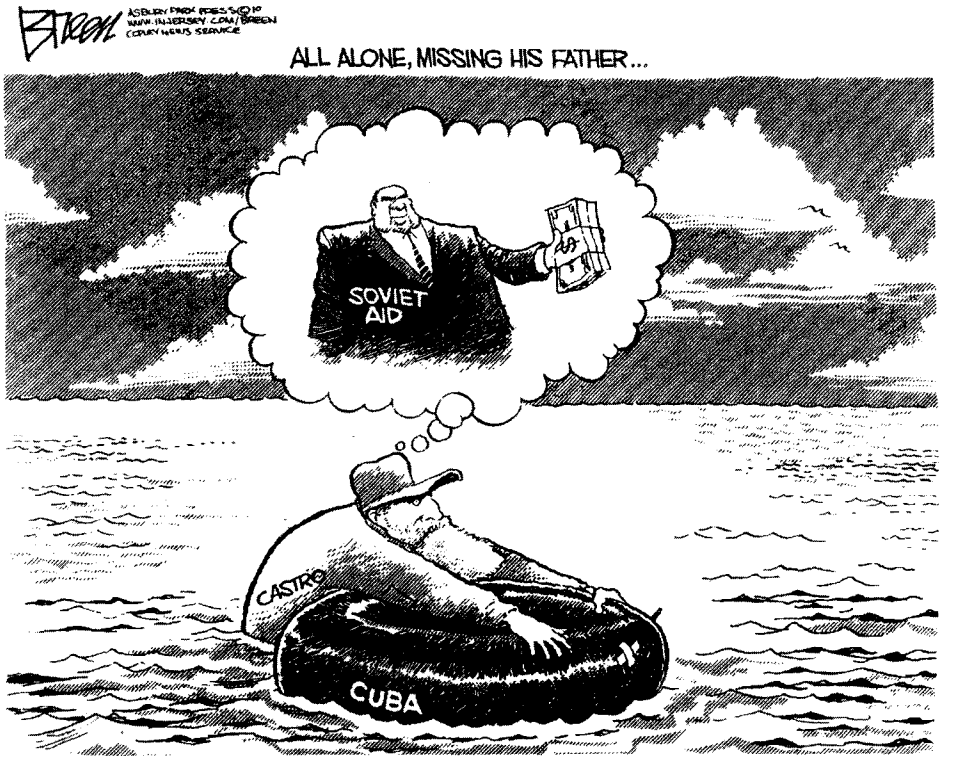

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Evil Genius

CHRISTOPHER CALDWELL

Mao: A Life, by Philip Short (Holt, 782 pp., $37.50)

Mao Zedong, by Jonathan Spence (Viking, 188 pp., $19.95)

Xinhua News Agency

Mao celebrates Stalin's 70th birthday at the Kremlin, December 1949.

OF last century's evil geniuses—Hitler, Stalin, and Mao—Mao has the best claim to genius *tout court*. He united a China long thought ununitable, thereby taking a quarter of the world's people from warlord rule into the age of nuclear weaponry. He read widely in Chinese and Western thought, wrote impressive poetry, carried out rigorous studies of Chinese peasant life, and was the strategist of the Red Army's "Long March," the most daring—and successful—military retreat of modern times. But, whatever his other accomplishments, the regime Mao set up in 1949 was the most murderous in history, killing at least 30 million through executions, torture, and avoidable famines.

It's strange, then, that while dozens of lives of Hitler and Stalin have appeared, Mao has lacked for biographers. One can blame the closed archives of totalitarian China, the formidable language barrier that confronts otherwise-eager scholars, or the chic that Mao enjoyed in academic circles in the 1960s—which makes Mao's brutality most embarrassing for the very people in the best position to chronicle it. No matter what the reason, Mao's evil has been as overlooked as his genius. That two new biographies have appeared at once—cultural historian Jonathan Spence's thumbnail life, and British journalist Philip Short's 800-page blockbuster—is a sign that history is ready to pass judgment.

In Mao's youth, China was a Hobbesian chaos. The weak, corrupt Qing dynasts sold off coastal and riverine trading "concessions" to as many as eight foreign powers. The Japanese occupied Taiwan and the cities of Manchuria. Warlords fought over the rest. Sun Yat-sen's Guomindang—when its leaders weren't being kidnapped and killed—championed the Westernizing upper-middle class of South China's ports. But Mao saw little of that. He was from inland Hunan, one of the most inward-looking and xenophobic of China's states. At 17, Mao heard of the death of the Qing emperor—two years after it had happened. At 18, he saw his first newspapers. At 19, studying Adam Smith, Darwin, Rousseau, and Montesquieu in the provincial capital of Changsha, he saw his first maps. A doting teacher found him work—at half a rickshaw-coolie's wage—in Beijing's university library, where scholars snickered at his hick accent. Mao slept on boards and shat outdoors for much of his adult life.

Mao had two extraordinary gifts that made his rise from farm boy to dictator more plausible than it would appear at first glance. The first was a talent for organization so uncanny that Spence speculates his natural calling was as a businessman. Everything he touched blossomed. The "study circles" he launched were rapidly oversubscribed. The weeklies he wrote for leapt in circulation and got banned. The "Cultural Book Society" he founded made huge profits. In a few months as a Hunan labor organizer, he managed to send tens of thousands of workers on strike and win dramatic wage increases for almost all of them. And the Chinese Communist Party, which had only 195 members when he helped found it in 1921, had 57,000 by 1927.

Mao's second gift was a cultural self-confidence that made his provinciality a strength rather than a weakness. Mao never went abroad until he visited Stalin shortly after taking power, and he was less bamboozled by foreign theory than any of his comrades. Mao distrusted many of China's traditions—above all, the "organized rape" of arranged marriage. (Mao's own marital career—four wives and nine children, several of them

Mr. Caldwell is senior writer at *The Weekly Standard*.

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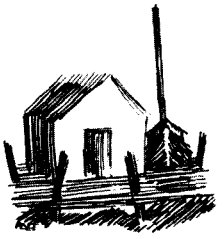
orphaned off, one of them *lost* during a military campaign, and only two surviving until adulthood—doesn't speak particularly well of the institution.) But he had been marked by those traditions, and admired the ancient dynasts who had upheld them—like Lord Shang, who enslaved the idle and sawed his political opponents in half.

Mao never swallowed Marxism whole, and Moscow's idea that China's million industrial workers could form a revolutionary vanguard struck him as a joke. Anyone who expected the tradition-bound masses to revolt spontaneously would wait forever. Mao proved indispensable to the Communist movement because he was willing to be right even at the risk of being isolated. A half-dozen times he was shoved aside by his doctrinaire comrades, and just as often he was asked back. When the Communists, at Moscow's insistence, joined the larger Guomindang, now led by Chiang Kai-shek, Mao got a seat on the Guomindang's executive committee. But he was so cannily skeptical about the merits of a "bourgeois" alliance that he became a natural battlefield leader when that alliance dissolved into civil war.

Mao had dabbled with anarchism and nonviolence in his youth, but by the time he became a battlefield commander in the 1930s and '40s, he was fully convinced that "power grows from the barrel of a gun" (to quote his most famous aphorism). Now party chairman, he eluded all of Chiang's attempts to encircle him—finally leading 86,000 men on a 5,000-mile trek west into the Himalayas and north across deserts and poisonous swamps, fighting 200 separate battles along the way. Yes, the Long March was a debacle, a death march that only 5,000 men survived. But it also ensured that the Red Army would last until World War II drove Japan out of China, at which point Mao could vie with Chiang as a "national liberator." Chiang relied on Russian and, later, U.S. military aid—$300 billion worth. Mao used the peasantry both as a "sea in which [guerrilla] fish could swim" and the source of 2 million conscripts. Mao won.



As a military commander-cum-party chairman Mao learned to enforce conformity by terrorizing his fellow Communists. As early as 1931, years before Stalin's show trials, Mao identified a group called the "AB-*tuan*," accused them of counterrevolutionary activities, and launched a purge that left tens of thousands dead. Conspirators were discovered through interrogation, which could take one of two routes, according to one aide: "You force [the suspect] to confess, then he confesses, you believe him and you kill him; or he does not confess and you kill him." The Maoist touch was this: As with other "counter-

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By the time he became a battlefield commander, Mao was fully convinced that 'power grows from the barrel of a gun.'

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revolutionary conspiracies" that Mao rooted out and purged—from the "Wang Shiwei counterrevolutionary conspiracy" of 1943 through the "Hu Feng clique" of 1955 to the "Luo-Zhang Alliance" of the late 1960s—there is no evidence that the "AB-*tuan*," or anything like it, ever existed.

In the wake of the Long March, Mao used a decade of isolation in the northern village of Yan'an to build a reputation as a thinker. By taking Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Kautsky and adapting them to local culture, he invented "Maoism." For practical purposes, this meant adding the excesses of the warlords to the excesses of the Stalinists. But to wishful-thinking foreign intellectuals, Mao's emphasis on adapting Marxist dogmas promised *flexibility*—precisely the opposite of what Mao envisioned. Mao's writings thus made him more palatable to the outside world at the very moment he was consolidating his totalitarian rule.

Mao considered Stalin "three parts bad and seven parts good." But after Nikita Khrushchev's 1956 denunciation of Stalinism, Mao, too, opened up, urging that China "let a hundred flowers bloom, a hundred schools of thought contend." We now know this was a trap, though Mao may initially have sought to use a proto-*glasnost* to lure exiled brain-workers back to China.

The problem was that Mao, ruling from the seclusion of Beijing's imperial Forbidden City, had begun to act like an emperor himself. He indulged all his whims. While preaching sexual continence to the public, he kept a stable of girlish mistresses. He was paranoid, or watchful, enough to have his food tasted for him. He dominated his subordinates until contradicting him became an act of folly. (Hence the rapid rise of the compliant mediocrity Chou En-lai.) Finally, Mao had grown so unused to contrary opinion that he couldn't conceive that free-thinking people would oppose him. Nonetheless, he also hoped the Hundred Flowers campaign would lead "bad people [to] expose and isolate themselves." When openness resulted in accusations of "tyranny," "arbitrary and reckless" government, and the "fascist methods of Auschwitz," he purged 6 million Communists, and sent half a million more to reeducation camps.

Mao, for all his brilliance, was practicing an increasingly infantile politics, based on such slogans as "The Four Clean-ups," "The Five Antis," and "The Elimination of the Four Pests," to make China "The Country of the Four Noes" (no rats, no sparrows, no flies, no mosquitoes). He took to baiting China's intellectual classes with a scatological peasant wisdom that was its own parody. (On Marxist dogma: "Your dogma is of less use than dogs***. Dogs*** can fertilize fields and man's s*** can feed dogs. But dogmas? They can't fertilize fields and they can't feed dogs. What use are they?" On the Soviet invasion of Hungary: "If there is a pustule, it must emit pus." On the Khrushchev speech: "Not all Soviet farts are fragrant!")

Mao's fantasy politics culminated in the Great Leap Forward of the late 1950s. Mao conceived the megalomaniacal idea of producing half the world's steel, and was willing to militarize his factories to achieve it. Industrial workers slept at their machines, so as not to lose time commuting. For a time, a quarter of the Chinese shifted over to making steel. To meet their quotas, people were melting down pots, pans, bikes, and radiators ripped out of schoolhouse

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walls. When Mao established grain targets 50 percent higher than the previous record harvest, no one dared tell him that the targets hadn't been met. So when 1960 saw the worst drought in a century, 25 million people starved. Khrushchev thought Mao so nuts that he canceled plans to send China a sample atom bomb.

Mao's great orgy of willed violence began in February 1965, when his fourth wife, the sadistic ex-dancing girl Jiang Qing, attacked "bourgeois decadence and corruption in the arts." The Cultural Revolution, as it was called,

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The Cultural Revolution resembled Hitler's Germany—normal society as a permanent pogrom.

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was to be an elaborate purge of the circle around Mao's chosen successor Liu Shaoqi. But under the leadership of Mao's secret-police chief Kang Sheng, it soon became a generalized crusade under which all conceivable sources of alternative ideologies were destroyed.

Mao liked to think he was revivifying the revolutionary spirit. What he was actually doing was taking New Soviet Man (Chinese Model) out for a test drive. His instrument of terror was the Red Guards, freelance thugs from the universities. Mao urged them to hold "struggle meetings," which combined the worst of lynch mobs and show trials, and at which spectacular tortures took place: raping old men with thorny sticks, stuffing women's vaginas with dirty laundry, barbecuing students with hot pokers for six hours or so, burying teachers alive in excrement, ordering families to sit on piles of explosives and blow each other up. By the end of all this, half a million people had been murdered and several million more purged from the Party, tortured, and maimed.

Both Spence and Short bend over backwards to try to understand the Cultural Revolution. Spence says Mao "did not precisely orchestrate" it. And yet, the attacks on architectural treasures stopped at the gates of Mao's Forbidden City. The attacks on institutions spared the army and the secret police (although both were forbidden from coming to the rescue of victims singled out by the students). The denunciations never touched Mao's favorites. And up until the violence began to abate in 1968 and 1969, whenever Mao ordered local depredations to stop, they *stopped*.

If Mao's Stalinism ended with the Great Leap, the Cultural Revolution resembled Hitler's Germany—normal society as a permanent pogrom. A million Red Guards gathered in Tiananmen Square for Nuremberg-style rallies, and Mao gave them free train passes so they could maraud all over the country. All houses, trains, bikes, buses, and taxis had to have a picture of Mao. Ticket-takers greeted commuters with declamations of Mao thought. It became illegal to use perfume, to smoke, to own cats or dogs, to own potted plants, all of them considered bourgeois, reactionary habits. A third of Beijing's residences were raided. Libraries, temples, and bookstores were emptied and books burned in the streets. Under government urging to "Smash the Four Olds" ("old thought, old culture, old customs, old practices"), tombs were desecrated and most of China's cultural heritage was destroyed. Mao's "patriotism," like Hitler's, was finally another word for the hatred he bore his country for not resembling his psychopathic fantasies about it.

The historical record on Mao has long required careful assembling. To this end, Short's book is a masterpiece: encyclopedic in its scope, drawing from primary sources in Chinese, Russian, and English, and riveting in its narrative. Where it falls down is in its tendency to explain away Mao's outrages. Short accuses Mao of "stupendous arrogance," but winds up making a plea for him as a kind of necessary evil. In this, Short joins the school of thought that holds that a massive agricultural nation like China could not have been modernized without "breaking a few eggs." That this view is entirely conventional makes it no less obscene.

Nor can Mao be absolved of the 25 million "unintended casualties" of the Great Leap simply because he "didn't know" of the famines. If Mao didn't know, it was only because his advisers had reason to believe that leveling with him would get them killed. If this "epic struggle" was the only possible way to modernize China, then Short has no right to his assumption that modernizing China was worth it. And China's commercial boom in the post-Mao era is an indication that there *was* another way.

It may be impossible for a comprehensive biography like Short's to sustain moral outrage—let alone a thesis—for very long. That's why such telephone-book biographies have become the bane of editors and book reviewers—and the occasion for Viking's new series of "brief lives," of which Spence's is the most recent example. A short biography is not the place for a balanced portrait—and that's its great advantage, particularly when the subject is a moral monster like Mao. Unfortunately, Spence's book tries to cover all the ground Short's book does, and winds up sounding perfunctory, like an encyclopedia entry or an executive summary.

American readers will be surprised by the short shrift international conflict gets in both books. Neither author does more than allude to China's role in Vietnam, and Mao's foreign policy remains an afterthought. But that is perhaps as it should be. Mao's great schemes were directed largely at reforming his own people. His legacy, like those of China's great classical emperors, is to be found not in any conquests but in the state he left behind, which has endured thus far. The key question in coming years will be whether Mao so strengthened the administrative structures of the big, backward, authoritarian inland that it will be able to resist permanently the efforts of the outward-looking coastal trading centers to liberalize the country. It's still unclear whether China is emerging as the world's preeminent trading post or its preeminent penal colony.

Even so, Short's belief that a "final verdict" on Mao's record is "still a very long way off" is dubious. Enough evidence is in. Mao's place in his country's annals is no harder to reckon than the places of Hitler and Stalin in theirs. **NR**

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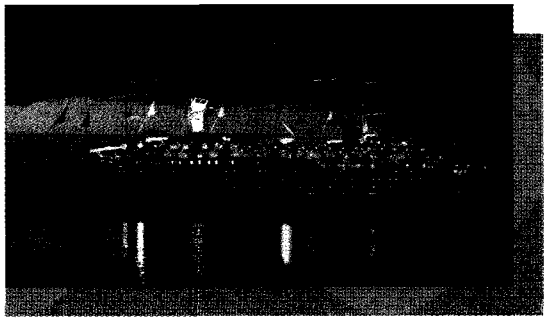

This airy and elegant five-masted, 617-foot cruise yacht surrounds you with a mix of natural fabrics and polished wood, its gorgeous interior lit by huge windows that frame the beautiful blue sea. Weighing in at 14,745 tons and hosting an intimate capacity of just 312 passengers, throughout this graceful vessel (you may even get the chance to sail it!) you'll find quiet corners and intimate retreats, and so much more, including a full library (stocked with books, CDs, and videos), a casino, two hot tubs/jacuzzis, two outdoor saltwater pools, a Water Sports platform (equipped with windsurfers, sailboats, water-ski boats, and scuba and snorkeling gear galore), a fitness center with an aerobics studio, the Wind Spa, a sauna, a full-service salon, the Wind Surf Lounge and Compass Rose Piano and Pool Bars, the Sports and Signature Shops, and, in addition to the main Dining Room, the Veranda Bistro (wherever you eat, the seating is always "open" and the attire always casual). The service is pampering and unsurpassed (the crew is the *crème de la crème* of Holland American Line's family).

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SUITE: You may get lost in the cavernous 376 square feet of polished wood, natural fabrics, and luxury comfort. Each *Wind Surf* Suite is equipped with a CD player, VCR, multi-channel radio, swivel-mounted television (the ship's library has 500 videos and CDs available), and mini-bar (restocked daily). There are "His and Hers" bathrooms *avec* fragrant soaps, hairdryers, and terry-cloth bathrobes. Full-length closets and *beaucoup* drawers offer storage galore. See the deep blue sea from two classic porthole windows. Dream sweet dreams as you sleep on a comfortable queen-sized bed (which can be converted into two twin-sized beds). Entertain newfound friends in the large sitting area. Life is good!

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Single Rate: $8,999

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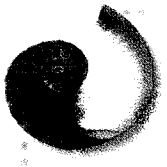
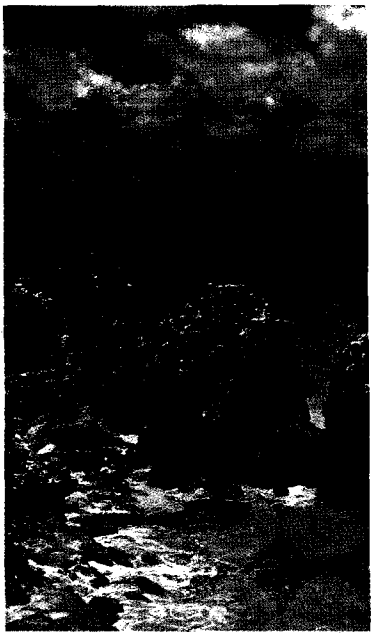


Idyllic Ports of Call



ST. BARTHELEMY, LEEWARD ISLANDS. Picture-perfect, tiny "St Barts" has long been the haunt of the very rich who come for privacy, gorgeous beaches, and exquisite French cuisine. It has 20 or more magnificent beaches, linked by hilly narrow roads you can explore in open-air Jeeps or "mini-mokes." In Gustavia, the island's Lilliputian port, quaint streets lead past small markets and bakeries—and dozens of small shops selling French perfumes, sportswear, watches, and crystal.

BRIDGETOWN, BARBADOS. This infectiously happy island, with beautiful beaches and balmy weather, has a delightful British flair. As a result of its successful sugar economy in the 17th and 19th centuries, you'll find large manor estates full of fine Barbados mahogany and antiques, along with gaily painted wooden-frame houses—the essence of the festive Caribbean. Rum rules in Barbados, and, over the centuries, cane plantations have divided the landscape into a pretty patchwork of fields, coconut and royal palms, breadfruit, oleander, and citrus trees. (P.S.: We'll be offering pre- and post-cruise options at the famous Sam Lord's Castle!)

ILES DES SAINTES, LESSER ANTILLES. Pastoral and far off the beaten track, the Saintes are a cluster of eight islands off the southern coast of Guadeloupe. In Bourg, the charming hamlet on Terre-de-Haut, the largest island, you can wander peaceful streets past small houses, then follow the narrow road out of town through fields and hills to a sweeping strand of secluded beaches.

NEVIS, LEEWARD ISLANDS. Nevis is an almost-perfect volcanic cone rising up from the sea and covered with bougainvillea, hibiscus, and many other lush tropical plants. For a time we'll be anchoring outside of Charlestown, the island's capital, for those who wish to go ashore on tours or on their own, then repositioning to a nearby idyllic beach for an afternoon of watersports, sunning, and a festive beach barbecue prepared by the ship's crew.

PIGEON ISLAND, ST. LUCIA, WINDWARD ISLANDS. The twin towers of the Pitons, two volcanic peaks rising to more than 2,400 feet, mark St. Lucia, an island of lush green valleys, acres of banana plantations, and bubbling sulfur springs. Some 24 miles of vibrant reef make St. Lucia a haven for divers and snorkelers. Pigeon Island National Park, a 40-acre island connected to the mainland by a causeway, was once a pirates' hideaway. Today, impressive ruins of old English forts, archaeological relics of Arawak Indians, and splendid beaches make this a fascinating place to explore.

ST MARTIN, DUTCH ANTILLES. St Martin, the "French" side of this beautiful island (the "Sint Maarten" half is Dutch) of white-sand beaches (over 10 miles!), features the *chic* capital, Marigot, of shops, bistros, and charming cafés. Cross the border and head for Philipsburg, where you will find gingerbread West Indian buildings that house excellent duty-free shops.

Exciting, Exclusive Itinerary

DATE	DAY	PORT/TIMES	EXCLUSIVE *NR* EVENTS
Dec. 10	Sunday	Bridgetown, Barbados	Welcome Reception
Dec. 11	Monday	At Sea	Seminars, Morning & Afternoon Cocktail Reception (pre-dinner)
Dec. 12	Tuesday	Nevis, 8AM–5PM	Late-night smoker (post-dinner)
Dec. 13	Wednesday	St Martin, 8AM–1AM	Seminar, Morning
Dec. 14	Thursday	St Barthelemy, 8AM–5PM	Seminar, Morning
Dec. 15	Friday	Iles des Saintes, 8AM–5PM	Seminar, Afternoon Late-night smoker (post-dinner)
Dec. 16	Saturday	Pigeon Island, St. Lucia, 7AM–3PM	Seminar, Afternoon Cocktail Reception (pre-dinner)
Dec. 17	Sunday	Bridgetown, Barbados, 6AM arrival	

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2000 POST-ELECTION CRUISE APPLICATION

Mail to: National Review Cruise, The Cruise Authority, 1307 Powers Ferry Rd., Marietta, GA 30067-5409 or Fax to 770-916-1425

Please fill out application completely and mail with deposit check or fax with credit-card information. One application per cabin. If you want more than one cabin, make copies of this application. For questions call The Cruise Authority at 800-326-4971.

CUT HERE AND MAIL OR FAX TO THE CRUISE AUTHORITY

PERSONAL

Name #1 (full legal name) + Nickname shirt size (M/L/XL)

Name #2 (full legal name) + Nickname shirt size (M/L/XL)

Names #3 & #4 (if taking others in your cabin)

Street Mailing Address

City State Zip

( )

Daytime Phone

PAYMENT

A deposit of $1,500 per cabin is due with this application. Cabins and Categories are available on a first come, first served basis.

☐ My deposit of $1,500 per cabin is included.
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☐ Charge to: AmEx ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover

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Expiration Date (Month) ☐☐ (Year) ☐☐

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Authorized Signature of Cardholder/Guest

Information and a price quote on Cancellation Fee Waiver/Medical Insurance will accompany your statement. Cancellation Penalty Schedule follows (cancellations must be received in writing by the date indicated):

Prior to July 11, 2000	$75 per person
July 11 to September 11, 2000	$750 per person
After September 11, 2000	100% of cruise

CRUISE

(All rates are per person, double occupancy. Single rates available upon request. Air/Sea rates include roundtrip air and transfers from select gateways, all port charges and taxes, all gratuities, meals, entertainment, and *National Review* activities. Cruise-only rates include all of above except airfare. Failure to appear for embarkation for any reason constitutes a cancellation subject to full penalties. Personal items not included.)

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I. CABIN CATEGORY

Choice of Cabin Category: ☐ Suite (*limited*!) ☐ Deluxe Cabin

Bedding: Beds made up as ☐ Twin ☐ Queen

Booking Single?: Do you want us to try to match you with a roommate?

☐ Yes (your age ____) ☐ No

II. AIR/TRANSFER PACKAGES

☐ I/we will provide our own roundtrip air to Barbados (see below).

☐ Book my air from _____ (see list below).

III. GENERAL INFORMATION

Citizenship: Is everyone a U.S. citizen? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If No, indicate citizenship _____

Special Information (medical conditions, celebrating anniversary, etc.)

IMPORTANT

Everyone cruising will be required to bring either a valid passport OR a certified birth certificate (with raised seal), plus photo ID. Failure to do so may result in being denied boarding of the *WindSurf*. Children do not require photo ID.

CONDITIONS FOR PASSAGE: H2O, Ltd. d/b/a The Cruise Authority or National Review, Inc., its owners, agents or employees accept no responsibility whatsoever for illness, accident, death, dismemberment, weather, strikes, acts of God, or the accessibility, appearance, actions, or decisions of those individuals promoted for the cruise. Nor can the above-mentioned entities be held responsible for the actions of Holland America Line/Windstar Cruises, participating air carriers, or shoreside personnel or subcontractors. Return of this application indicates full understanding and acceptance of these conditions for passage.

NR221

AIR TRAVEL TO BARBADOS: Due to the nature of the cruise, Windstar Cruises is unable to offer extensive airfare options. Please consider one of the following options for making air transportation to Barbados for the cruise. Please know that you **must** arrive in Bridgetown, Barbados, *no later than 10:00PM on Sunday, December 10, 2000*, in order to make the ship in time for sailing. Do **not** schedule a return flight before 9:00AM on Sunday, December 17, 2000 (this will allow you ample time to disembark the *WindSurf*, transfer, and go through customs). Complimentary roundtrip transfers to/from the airport will be provided, but you must forward your air schedule to The Cruise Authority no later than November 24, 2000. **OPTION 1**: Book your own air schedule, making certain to adhere to the times discussed above. This option gives you the greatest flexibility and control over your air schedule. **OPTION 2**: You may contact American Airlines and access a discount group fare which has been set up specifically for the *National Review* group. Call toll-free, 1-800-433-1790, and refer to **Star File #69DOUA**. Make your booking and pay for it as you normally would with any airline. **OPTION 3**: Book your air via Windstar Cruises from the "gateways" listed below. A forced overnight may be required either pre- or post-cruise, at your expense, and we have no control over when or if it will be required. Prices are per person, round trip, coach. Gateways with asterisk marks (**) traditionally require a forced overnight in Miami ($132) or Barbados ($195):

Atlanta	$760	Detroit	$1,010	Oklahoma City	$940	San Francisco	$980
Baltimore	$850	Houston	$910	Orlando	$760	Seattle**	$1,060
Boston	$740	Kansas City	$930	Philadelphia	$750	St. Louis	$1,060
Chicago	$860	Los Angeles	$930	Phoenix**	$1,070	Tampa	$760
Cincinnati	$990	Miami	$660	Pittsburgh	$900	Tucson	$1,060
Cleveland	$920	Minneapolis	$1,070	Portland**	$1,070	Washington, DC	
Dallas	$900	New Orleans	$800	Salt Lake City**	$1,050	(DCA or IAD)	$780
Denver	$980	New York	$830	San Diego**	$1,040		

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Rock-Star Rembrandt

JAMES GARDNER

Rembrandt's Eyes, by Simon Schama (Knopf, 750 pp., $50)

FOR two centuries now we have been conjuring almost compulsively with the name of Rembrandt van Rijn. Even people who know nothing about art know something about him. He is the great painter par excellence, the man who distilled humanity into pigment, the scourge of prigs, the champion of underdogs, the complete mensch. His rebellion is one in which even conformists can take comfort and have a share. Like Shakespeare, Leonardo, and Beethoven, he appears to stand at the very summit of human culture, to embody all that is best in our natures. And then, of course, there is the sheer monetary value of his works. More than diamonds, Porsches, or weapons-grade plutonium, the very fabric of his canvas is the incarnation of money, of portable capital pure and simple.

That it was not always so makes it only more so now. In Leiden and Amsterdam, where he spent most of his life, Rembrandt (1606–1669) was often, though not always, reviled and misunderstood. In the latter part of his life he was constantly in debt. He seems to be the first and greatest of those Bohemians who hold such an odd and irresistible charm for the bourgeois in his armchair. Though men like Rubens and Raphael rose above their respective ages, they also moved comfortably within them. But Rembrandt was too introspective to serve his age as his age wished to be served. *The Night Watch*, for example, is great art, but it is a little too complex, a little too nuanced to have propitiated the vanity of public men who had paid their five guilders simply to be flattered and have done.

Several years back, in an article in the *New York Times*, Simon Schama wrote that "every generation gets the Rembrandt it deserves." I am not sure that I know what this means. What cannot be denied is that his new biography is conscientiously contemporary in spirit and tone. Describing one of Rembrandt's early self-portraits, Schama writes, "He is Hamlet in Holland, an inward-outward person, a poet in heavy-metal . . ." Regarding another portrait, he refers to Rembrandt's "rock-star stubble."

Schama himself, before shaving off his own stubble, looked peculiarly like this younger Rembrandt. And though he is not a rock star, the term "academic superstar" is so consistently affixed to his name that it sounds almost like a title.

Self-Portrait, *1658*

Now, being an academic superstar comes with certain rewards, foremost of which is the willingness of publishers to accommodate your merest whim. I mention this because, in reading *Rembrandt's Eyes*, I found it difficult to escape the impression that the author, in his love of his subject, had decided to write a big book on him and only then, after the fact, went looking for a suitable thesis—since, as everyone knows, a book needs to have a thesis.

In pursuit of this thesis, however, he appears to have spun out of whole cloth a purely fictitious conflict. "There was a time," he writes, "not so very long ago, before the anachronism police had been sent out on monograph patrol, when 'genius' and 'Rembrandt' seemed to belong in the same sentence." He goes on to say that "the post-war aversion to any kind of cultural heroism, which at its most extreme ended up in the endeavor to get rid of the idea of authorial originality altogether, was bound to discount the originality of his innovation." And

Rembrandt, says Schama, is 'Hamlet in Holland, . . . a poet in heavy-metal.'

yet, the only instance Schama cites of this view is the doctoral dissertation of a single, obscure Dutch scholar named Jan Emmens.

Schama's pretexts, for such they are, seem confused to say the least. Surely the notion that Rembrandt was a genius is as current in common parlance as it ever was. Furthermore, in discussing Rembrandt, postwar Modernists—especially André Malraux—played up the tormented-genius bit to an almost comical degree.

Another of Schama's culprits is the Rembrandt Research Project, a consortium of Dutch scholars to whom Schama attributes the belief that the artist's manner "could be imitated by others to a degree of plausibility that has made any serious differentiation between the real and the unreal item all but impossible." This too is an almost reckless paraphrasis: If anything, the RRP is redoubted and loathed precisely because of its dogmatical rulings on what is real and what is not real in the Rembrandt corpus.

"Insofar as Rembandt's painting is still thought distinctive," Schama continues, "it is now fashionably reckoned to be the product of . . . his society, his culture, his teachers, his patron." What is weird about this is that, even to the extent that it is true, Schama proceeds to do the very same thing, although in his own acrobatically eccentric way. His *idée maîtresse* is that Rembrandt, especially early on, was almost neurotically fixated on Rubens. "Rembrandt was haunted by [Rubens]. He had become Rubens's doppelgänger. When, for the first time, he etched himself half-length, en-

Mr. Gardner is a frequent contributor to NATIONAL REVIEW.

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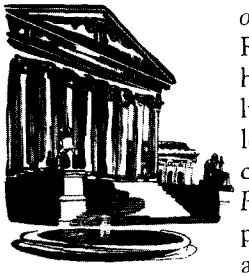
veloped in a grandiose cape, it was as if he had superimposed his face on the body and deportment of his paragon. The face declared itself, unmistakably, to be Rembrandt. But everything else whispered 'Rubens.'" At the risk of indelicacy, this is nonsense. Though it is true enough, for what it is worth, that the etching in question recalls Rubens's self-portrait, all of the younger artist's other self-portraits, before and after, look entirely different, entirely Rembrandtian. Second, if it is true that he learned some tricks from Rubens, he learned far more from Pieter Lastman, Hercules Seghers, and a dozen other more proximate painters than from a foreigner he had never even met. What he got from Rubens, in other words, was not a thousandth part of what Van Dyck took away from the older master, yet one would seriously propose that Van Dyck was Rubens's doppelgänger.

Silliness aside, Schama tells his tale with a certain gusto, not to say razzle-dazzle.

Fortunately, these theses, as window-dressing, have little organic relation to the rest of the text. The general public will not care about them either way and will read the biography for all the best and most old-fashioned reasons, namely to deepen their acquaintance with this eminent artist. Silliness aside, Schama tells his tale with a certain gusto, not to say razzle-dazzle. And if he does not allow his readers to feel as if they really know the artist, in the way that Ellmann enables us to know Oscar Wilde, or Edel enables us to know Henry James, still Schama vividly conjures up the age in which Rembrandt lived and the environment in which he moved.



It does not help, however, that Schama has a tin ear. Describing one tumultuous period in Rembrandt's life, he writes that "euphoria and sorrow were advancing toward each other like two dancers from opposite sides of a room." Then there is the padding. The most disconcerting example of all is surely the 150-page digression on Rubens. At one point, he mentions that Rembrandt's first wife was from a family of Mennonites. This induces him to link that sect to the earlier Anabaptists, which leads to a digression on a radical subsect of the Anabaptists that ruled briefly in Münster over a hundred years before. If my math is correct, we are now at five removes from Rembrandt van Rijn.

Evident throughout his book is Schama's love, above all, of Holland in its golden age. In this regard he reveals himself to be more a historian than a biographer, and more a biographer than an art historian. That is to say that he is more interested in attendant circumstances than in individual human beings, and more interested in personality than in art. Often, in reading *Rembrandt's Eyes*, one wonders whether Schama's own eyes are sensitive enough to write about Rembrandt's art. Though Schama devotes a great deal of space to discussing painting, it is here most of all that he reveals his limitations. Regarding *Balaam and the Ass*, for example, Schama claims that "by making visual connections among pulled bridle, raised stick, and upright sword, the artist has set in motion . . . a rhythm of dynamic, violent action." The problem is that the rhythm to which he refers is simply not to be found in this rather weak piece of apprentice work. Then, as a model for the famous *Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Tulp*, Schama cites Rubens's *Tribute Money*, which has nothing to do with it visually or otherwise, yet he overlooks the far more likely connection to Rubens's *Four Philosophers*, of which a full-page, full-color reproduction appears a little earlier in his own book. And though the 1654 image of *Jan Six* is very fine, it is hard to imagine what was going through Schama's mind or his eyes when he pronounced it "the greatest portrait of the seventeenth century."

Behind such fustian, one suspects, is a confidence in the apparent subjectivity of art writing, a confidence that, in the end, there is no disputing taste. Schama likes this maxim so much that he refers to it more than once. For his sake, it had better be true. **NR**

Score One for Nature

JOHN DERBYSHIRE

Taboo: Why Black Athletes Dominate Sports and Why We Are Afraid to Talk About It, by Jon Entine (Public Affairs, 387 pp., $25)

By and large, sports events are meritocratic. That is their main appeal. In most other areas of life—in business, in politics, in academic and artistic endeavor, in love and war—there are large elements of caprice, of misjudgment, of chicanery and wild chance, of faddishness, even of corruption. In the lives that most of us live, the race is not always to the swift nor the battle to the strong; on the contrary, observed results all too often prompt the melancholy reflection that, as the saying goes, "gold sinks but garbage floats."

At a track meet, however, the athletes' abilities are measured against tape or stopwatch with the precision of a scientific experiment. In team games much more often than not we come away with no doubt that the superior team won.

If the meritocratic principle is going to throw up any problems, it is therefore in sports that we should expect to see them soonest and most clearly. So it has proved. As social and international barriers to participation in sports have fallen away, it has become clear that, in any given event, athletes of some races are much better equipped to succeed than those of others. On page 30 of *Taboo*, there is a table of world running records. Fifteen events are listed, from the 100-meter sprint to the marathon. The recordholder for every single one of them is a person of recent African ancestry. In sprinting, West Africans and their descendants are overwhelmingly dominant: All of the 32 finalists in the last four Olympic men's 100-meter races were of West African descent. In middle- and long-distance running, athletes

Mr. Derbyshire is a contributing editor of National Review.

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from the highlands of western Kenya dominate to a similarly extraordinary degree. Contrariwise, Jon Entine tells us, no African American has ever qualified for the U.S. Olympic swim or diving team. Physiological investigation—of metabolic efficiency, muscle reflexes, bone density, and so on—leaves little doubt that the causative differences are innate, and so presumably coded in the genes. It seems plain, even after making all possible allowance for social and cultural factors, that in sports, nature generally trumps nurture.

The problem with all this is that it challenges the nurturist dogma preached by the media, cultural, and academic elites in the U.S.—and, to lesser degrees, in the rest of the Western

■

We can have equal outcomes by race, or we can have meritocracy, but we can't have both.

■

world. (The East is another matter altogether.) Richard Bernstein's review of this very book in the *New York Times* illustrates the problem. Bernstein declared himself "not convinced that environmental and cultural explanations are inadequate to account for the phenomenon under discussion." "Dogma" is too feeble a word, in fact: The ferocious tenacity with which nurturist beliefs are defended needs some explaining all by itself, especially in view of the implausibility of those beliefs. It would, after all, be statistically astounding if the only innate differences between the various types of people were those visible to the unaided eye.

So why *are* we afraid to talk about it? Why this passionate commitment to pure egalitarian theories, making discussion of race differences indeed a taboo? By way of an answer, Entine's book includes a history of the race issue in sports, describing the indignities endured by American blacks, the horrified realization of what Hitler's race program actually aimed at, and the poisonous influence of the notion that physical superiority is the expression of an "animal" nature. There is also, of course, the

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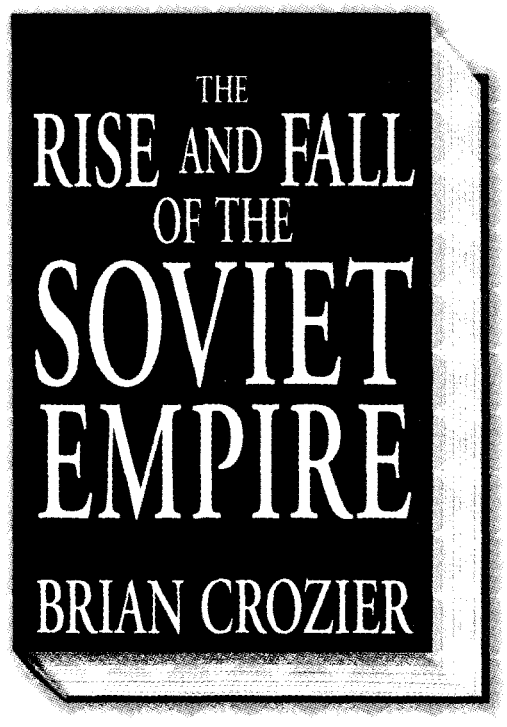

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unhappy history of racial injustice in American society at large. Reaction to all of this, implies Entine, engendered a mindset—still the dominant one among elites in the U.S.—that all discussion of race differences other than the glaringly obvious ones is improper. This doctrine has generated its own moonbeams-from-cucumbers extremists, as any doctrine will: We have, for example, Richard Rorty telling us that race is "a social construct" with no objective reality. It must be fun to watch the Olympics with Professor Rorty.

I do not feel sure that Entine has really got to the heart of the matter here. The fanatical egalitarianism of Western elites calls for some deeper explanation. Entine has, however, provided the first accessible survey of the topic identified in the first part of his book's subtitle, touching—if you will pardon the expression—all the bases. He has included a thorough discussion of the rather more complex matter of women's sports, as well as a wealth of curious and interesting statistics and factoids. Did you know, for example, that there is a Dog Genome Project under way? (Entine describes it as "modestly financed.")

The great value of *Taboo* is that it lets off another stick of dynamite under the nurturist consensus, which is already—as Charles Murray described in an article in this magazine last month ("Deeper into the Brain," Jan. 24)—beginning to crack and split. The evidence Entine presents is overwhelming, the larger conclusions plain: We can have equal outcomes by race, or we can have meritocracy, but we can't have both. We really need to decide which one we want.

Or do we? Just as the racial differences being revealed by the spread of meritocracy are beginning to cause serious social stresses, our understanding of molecular genetics may be reaching the point where we can make the necessary adjustments. Find yourself a geneticist and pose him a nature/nurture question. For example: Is the poor educational performance of black Americans caused by poverty or genetics? "You better hope it's genetics," he will reply cheerfully. "We'll know how to fix genetics long before we know how to fix poverty!"

If this is right, our worries about the divisive effect of race differences might seem as quaint, a hundred years from now, as our ancestors' fretting about a Malthusian population catastrophe. Perhaps it really is true that whenever social progress creates a problem, science will soon supply the means to solve it. This is a very cheering thought; and, if true, demonstrates at least to my satisfaction that somebody up there loves us. **NR**

The Anti-Teleocrat

FORREST McDONALD

A Defender of Southern Conservatism: M. E. Bradford and His Achievements, edited by Clyde N. Wilson (Missouri, 192 pp., $29.95)

THE breadth and depth of the late M. E. Bradford's scholarship was little short of awesome. As an English professor at the University of Dallas, he taught graduate courses in Anglo-Saxon literature, Chaucer, the Medieval lyric, the 16th century, Shakespeare, the 17th and 18th centuries, the English novel, Romanticism, Victorian poetry and prose, American literature, and modern literature. And though he was trained as a literary critic, he taught himself the entire range of the history of Western Civilization, becoming at home with the Greeks and Romans, the Renaissance, Tudor and Stuart England, and, most impressively, the American founding era. In these various fields he published prolifically: A checklist of his books, articles, and reviews—including some three dozen pieces in NATIONAL REVIEW—runs to 26 closely set pages.

Diffuse as Bradford's studies were, this excellent new collection of essays makes it clear that they rarely strayed from a central theme: the values inherent in being a committed defender of Southern Conservatism. (Bradford insisted on the distinction "between a conservative who is also a Southerner and a Southern Conservative.") The book is a tribute to the man and his work, but not in the sense of a Festschrift. Rather, after an introduction by Clyde Wilson and a charming account by Tom Landess of Bradford's teachers at Vanderbilt, it consists of analyses of aspects of Bradford's writing by nine scholars. The essays are a pleasure to read, and taken as a whole they are an educational experience.

Mr. McDonald is a professor of history at the University of Alabama.

As for Bradford's brand of conservatism, it was in part the traditionalist sort espoused by Edmund Burke, John Dickinson, and Russell Kirk, but it was tempered by the views of the Vanderbilt Fugitive Agrarians. Like the Agrarians, Bradford was skeptical of the advantages of unbridled industrial and financial progress at the expense of agriculture and rural and small-town life, and he believed, with them, that the decay of the great cities, the proliferation of crime, the rape of nature, the decline of the family, and the denigration of romantic love into mere lust were the inevitable fruits of that progress. Indeed, toward the end he concluded that loyalty to family, community, place, tradition, and heritage had declined so far that conservatism was not enough—hence the title of his 1990 book, *The Reactionary Imperative*.

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M. E. Bradford was of a gentle, even sweet disposition, except when attacking fashionable but pernicious ideas.

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Though he was a massive figure of a man, built on the proportions of an All-Pro lineman, Bradford was of a reasonable, gentle, even sweet disposition, except when attacking fashionable but pernicious ideas. On those occasions he became, while still reasonable, utterly merciless. He attributed the nation's fall from grace to a number of causes but especially to two doctrines that sound appealing in the abstract but are in reality alien to and corruptive of our traditional norms.

The first is the ideal of universal human brotherhood. In an early and revolutionary article about a Faulkner short story, Bradford railed against the commitment to "the communal anonymity of brotherhood," which is an abnegation

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of one's duty to one's actual kin. Borrowing from Albert Schweitzer, he added that all brothers in the family of man are either "younger brothers or older brothers," that some men are inevitably responsible for others and cannot "abandon them" to an abstract equality that does not and cannot exist. Or, as he put it elsewhere, "we have no social connections with any man if we have the same obligations to all."

His second *bête noire* was equality: The "hue and cry over equality of opportunity and equal rights leads, *a fortiori*, to a final demand for equality of condition," and only an all-powerful national government would have the means to achieve such equality. Equality of opportunity he characterized as foolish and chimerical, "the antonym of every legitimate conservative principle." It was "nothing less than sophistry to distinguish between equality of opportunity (equal starts in the 'race of life') and equality of condition (equal results). For only those who are equal can take advantage of a given circumstance. And there is no man equal to any other," except in the eyes of God.

Those words were written in response to Professor Harry Jaffa's claim that Abraham Lincoln was the great American hero for rightly folding the Declaration of Independence into the Constitution, completing the latter instrument by infusing it with the natural-law principle that all men are created equal. The debate lasted several years and led to Bradford's most audacious undertaking, an attack on that sacred icon, the Great Emancipator. To be sure, as Bradford made himself into an expert on Lincoln he became convinced that the man was a "dishonest" and duplicitous "pseudo-Puritan," the "American Caesar of his age." But his gravest misdeed, in Bradford's eyes, lay in his contribution to transforming the Constitution from a "nomocratic" instrument, a structural and procedural body of law designed to govern government itself, into a "teleocratic" one, aimed at bringing about a particular kind of society. This destroyed the original constitutional order, and for that offense Bradford could find no forgiveness.

His attack on Lincoln brought attacks on Bradford from all points on the political spectrum except that of fellow Southern Conservatives. In time, however, as he continued to turn out his writings, he built himself an enduring monument. For those who would like to see proof, *A Defender of Southern Conservatism* is warmly recommended. **NR**

■ **MUSIC** ■

All of Rubinstein

JAY NORDLINGER

TIME was, when you wanted to splurge on a set of records, you bought the Beethoven symphonies, or the Chopin nocturnes, or even *The Ring*. You might have had 20 LPs in a big, glorious box. These days, if you have the urge (and the cash), you can come away with whole suitcases of CDs. Teldec, this season, is offering the complete works of Bach, in a project called *Bach 2000*—which unfolds on 153 discs. Philips, for its part, has produced *Great Pianists of the 20th Century*—on a clean 200 discs. Most

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gratifyingly, we have, from BMG, *The Rubinstein Collection*, on 94 discs, documenting the career of the pianist Arthur Rubinstein. There are worse ways to spend $1,500. Rarely has a record company produced something so exalting.

In the recent Man of the Century business, we had no Pianist of the Century. But if we had named one, the winner would undoubtedly have been Rubinstein—and he would have received plenty of votes for Man, too. Rubinstein was idolized by millions, and he was most people's idea of a concert musician. His recordings have sold more than any other pianist's (which speaks well of the public taste). BMG's collection includes more than 700 of those recordings, all expertly remastered, and they amount to

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more than 100 hours of music. This is not merely quantity for quantity's sake, as with some of these monster sets, but the chronicle of a major life, as well as a large slice of musical history.

Consider: Rubinstein was born in 1887, made his first record in 1928, retired in 1976, and died in 1982, just before his 96th birthday. When the pianist was born, to a Polish-Jewish family in Lodz, Brahms still had ten more years to live; Richard Strauss was in his early 20s. When he died, John Cage was already 70; Shostakovich (whose life was long and full) had been dead for seven years. Think of it another way: Rubinstein's first mentor was Joseph Joachim, the great violinist and friend of Brahms. Rubinstein once played a concerto under Joachim's direction. He also played (and recorded) concertos under Daniel Barenboim, who even now is considered a youngish conductor. Rubinstein contained worlds within him. In his later years, he liked to remind people that, for him, Brahms was not an "old master," but a "living composer"—and so, given his musical imagination and empathy, were all the others.

In listening to his recordings, can we say that we have heard him, and that we know his playing? In fact, we can. For a variety of reasons, some of them mystical, certain musicians record well, while others do not. Certain musicians are able to transmit the essence of themselves through recordings, while others are simply dead to vinyl or any other technology, a shadow of their live-and-in-person selves. Rachmaninoff, to take a tragic example, did not record well—we have barely a flavor of his greatness in his recordings. Myra Hess, too, is more or less lost to the living: She detested recording, rarely submitted to it, and did it poorly. Godowsky, one of the most incandescent pianists of all time, was a disaster in the studio, and did not make live recordings.

Rubinstein, though, is alive and well, just as he planned. His son John says, wonderingly, that, when he listens to his father's albums, he feels as if the old master were in the room with him, "telling me all the most true things about himself." So it is with the rest of us. Rubinstein had a gift for recording as powerful as that for performing (and they are two distinct gifts, though of course related). He treated record-making as a grave responsibility, and something like a holy act. He refrained from recording until 1928 because he thought that earlier technologies made the piano sound like a banjo! In that pivotal year, however, he stepped into the studio with the Chopin *Barcarolle*, and never turned back. Of that first experience, he later recalled, "I had tears in my eyes. It was the kind of performance I had dreamed of, and the sound reproduced faithfully the golden tone of the piano. This was a very important day. A new life began for me." Rubinstein had discovered a grail—that exhilarating and reassuring "feeling of perpetuation."

Countless words have been written about Rubinstein's playing, but Barenboim, in an interview for the *Collection*, speaks as well as anyone: Rubinstein was "a wonderfully amusing person and a remarkable storyteller. He was a *grand seigneur*, always in control of the situation in the most affable and charming way. [What has this to do with his playing? Hang on a second.] He was extremely erudite, very well read, an accomplished linguist. He spoke many languages [eight, actually]. He knew his Goethe in German, his Shakespeare in English, his Balzac in French, his Turgenev in Russian. And when he played, you heard all that. There was a richness in his expression that [in addition to springing from his innate musicianship] came from his general culture."

In a characteristic pose

When Rubinstein played Spanish music, he was thoroughly, idiomatically, a Spaniard, and when he played French music, a Frenchman, and so on. His playing had a quality of "just rightness" about it that is breathtakingly apparent in the *Collection*'s sweep. If you believe for a moment that he was a Chopin specialist, listen to him in the Haydn F-minor variations, or in the Beethoven early C-major sonata, or in Debussy's *Reflets dans l'eau*. For that matter, put him to the truest test, and listen to him in Mozart. (How did Rubinstein approach Mozart? "On my knees.")

Always, there was that tone of his, instantly recognizable, exclusively his own. As Barenboim says, it "always had a center to it, no matter how quietly he played." It was "a full tone," achieved from playing deep into the keys, "never disembodied." In forte passages, it was "never harsh, but full and round, like a wonderful brass chorale." In soft passages, it retained its "singing line" and had no hint of artificiality. About tempo, Rubinstein was unerring. When a conductor asked what tempo he preferred, Rubinstein would smilingly answer, *Tempo giusto!* (the just, or right, tempo)—simple as that. And he was the perfect marriage of what might crudely be called the Classical and the Romantic styles. He brought to the Classical heart and bloom, and he imposed on the Romantic discipline and integrity. Though a magnetic personality, he was careful to allow the composer to speak for himself. As he put it, he "tried to get the music straight," for "it doesn't need anything: What Chopin [for example] has written into the music is good enough."

Above all, Rubinstein's playing was suffused with love—both for music and for life (which for him were the same). So is BMG's collection, suffused with love. This is not the usual language of music criticism, but it is the right language—*parola giusta!*—for Rubinstein. With this suitcase of CDs, a singular man—and all his friends (composers, collaborators), and all his learning, and all his experiences—are with you. His is the sound that every pianist carries in his ear. He thought a lot about his afterlife on recordings, and he worked very hard to arrange for it. Of his success there is no question: His play for posterity is complete. **NR**

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■ FILM ■

Life in the Slow Lane

JOHN SIMON

ALVIN STRAIGHT is a nice old man living—we don't quite know off what—in Laurens, Iowa, with his daughter Rose, who talks haltingly and whose four children have been taken away from her because she is slightly retarded and because one of them was badly burned in a fire. Alvin says, "She is a little bit slow, but her mind is like a bear trap." Laurens is a small town, and on the sunny day when ***The Straight Story*** begins, Main Street is deserted but for four dogs (not together) who bound across it in canine bliss.

Alvin has to be helped up from the floor of his shack by Rose, who finally manages to drag him off to a doctor. He is henceforth to use a walker, eat more judiciously, and stop smoking cigars. For the walker, he substitutes two canes; the rest he ignores. As he and Rose are watching a lightning storm, a phone call from someone informs Rose that Alvin's brother, Lyle, has had a stroke. Although they haven't spoken in ten years, Alvin resolves to visit Lyle in Mt. Zion, Wisconsin, a goodly distance away. His eyes do not permit him to drive a car, so he decides to travel by his lawn mower, to which he attaches a flimsy trailer. The townsfolk think him crazy, his mission impossible. But this is a true story.

The lawn mower conks out fairly promptly, and he returns to buy another model, used but newer. Off he goes again, unperturbed by the fact that whatever moves on the road lets him eat its dust. He carries victuals with him, and doesn't even mind that he rides on a backless seat. Modest adventures befall him. Thus, a surly girl hitchhiker, pregnant and running away from her family, comes upon his supper: roasting wieners on a campfire. He shares his meal and some good advice with her. Another time, he encounters a hysterical woman who has just run over a deer. Its antlers end up on his trailer, its meat lands in his stomach.

When a group of young touring cyclists swarm around him and eventually share a bivouac with him, one of them asks what is worst about getting old. He tells them: Remembering that one was once young. But he is content anyway, driving by day and sleeping by night, and dispensing bits of philosophy here and there, even if the wisdom is often derivative.

People, at least in the Midwest, are wonderfully kind. When his drive belt breaks on a steep incline, he nearly comes to grief. But some good folks from nearby come to his aid. One of them puts him up on his land, and summons a pair of comic repairmen to restore his vehicle. Alvin haggles with them pawkily. At times, the dialogue is very slow, but it always hits home.

It is refreshing, for one thing, to see a film about an old person, many of whose encounters are with other old-timers. For another, the characters have a simple, earthy reality. Pathos is never milked, except perhaps in a barroom episode where Alvin and another geezer reminisce about terrible wartime memories, but even this scene does not go overboard. And the kindness of strangers never turns sappy. The rest is taken care of by the acting, directing, and cinematography.

David Lynch is known for having directed some of the meanest, ugliest films on record; here, suddenly, he goes antithetical, and gives us one of the gentlest movies of recent times. And it works. Even when the pacing dawdles, the camera will be on the face of Richard Farnsworth, that superb 79-year-old actor, equally fascinating in quirkiness and in quietude. And the scenes on the road, amid typical uneventfully flat landscapes, are shot

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David Lynch suddenly goes antithetical, and gives us one of the gentlest movies of recent times.

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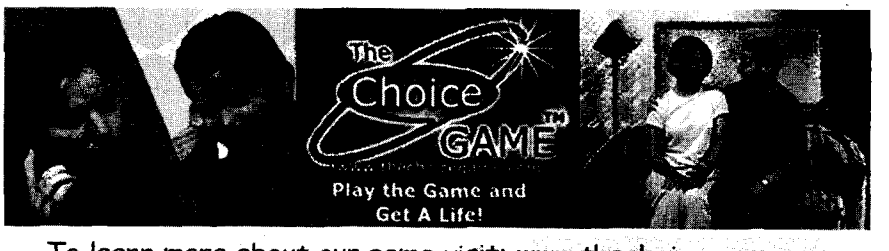

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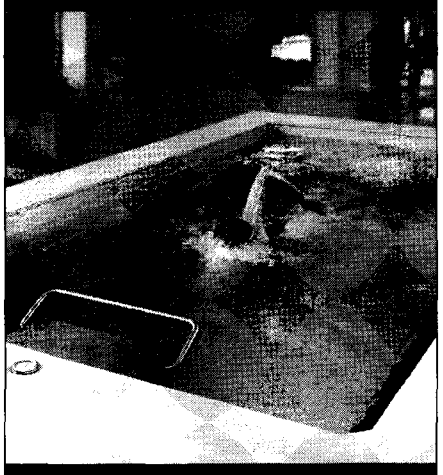

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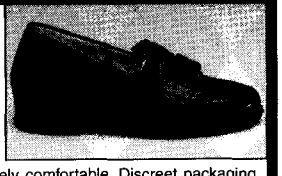

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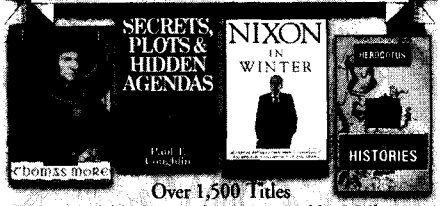

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with unfailing eloquence by Freddie Francis, the marvelous 82-year-old British cinematographer (and sometimes director), who manages to wrest a rich palette from wheat, asphalt, and some greenery. Also, the night sky with stars, a poetic leitmotif.

The screenplay by John Roach and the film's editor, Mary Sweeney, is humane and only occasionally a bit weirdly Lynchian, and the usually overwrought composer Angelo Badalamenti remains decently restrained. With Sissy Spacek (Rose) and Harry Dean Stanton (Lyle) leading an utterly believable supporting cast, *The Straight Story* gets it pretty much right.

■

When Anna meets the copious brood of King Mongkut of Siam, you expect her to burst into 'Getting to Know You.'

■

■ Others have also noticed that, from ***Anna and the King***, yet another version of the Anna Leonowens story that became the beloved musical *The King and I*, something is missing. That something is the Rodgers and Hammerstein score. When Anna, the new English governess, meets the copious brood of King Mongkut of Siam, you expect her to burst into "Getting to Know You." When she doesn't, the jig is just about up.

Such is the power of good musical comedy that once it grabs hold of a story, it doesn't let go. No matter that the king is here played by the Hong Kong superstar Chow Yun-Fat, who, unlike Yul Brynner, commands a full head of hair; no matter that Jodie Foster's Anna is ever so earnest and dedicated, to the point of almost managing a consistent British accent; no matter that this version includes battle footage and other previously unseen elements; no matter even that Luciana Arrighi's heady, on-location production design, Jenny Beavan's opulently authentic costuming, and Caleb Deschanel's fairy-tale-gorgeous cinematography enchant the eye—where, oh, where is the R&H score? George Fenton's background music is only a wooden nickel.

Upon closer look, other things are missing, too. More warmth from Jodie Foster, more idiosyncratic charm from Chow, more chemistry between the two principals, which, for all its churning, the movie fails to deliver. Not even the presence of 19 well-trained elephants makes the film memorable to anyone but an elephant. There are, however, impressive landscapes; they and Mongkut's palace, especially built for the movie, are sights to see. Otherwise, this unhummable Anna remains merely ho-hum.

■ Neil Jordan gives us a remake of Graham Greene's semiautobiographical novel ***The End of the Affair***, with Stephen Rea, Julianne Moore, and Ralph Fiennes playing, respectively, the husband, the wife, and the friend/lover. This triangle, set against the London Blitz and including even a direct hit on the house where adultery is in progress, makes for the melodrama of tortured conscience and Catholic guilt that was Greene's forte, and Jordan brings it vividly to the screen.

But Jordan must be more Catholic than—not quite the Pope—but Graham Greene, and has more nocturnal rain in his film than even London can usually produce. This, then, is a movie top-heavy with atmosphere, especially since Stephen Rea is always caught without an umbrella—most unlikely for a British civil servant, proverbially well-brollied. There are some fine moments, a plethora of sex, moody cinematography by Roger Pratt; but something is lacking, or too much, for the lay viewer. Moore, an American, impresses with her accent as much as with her acting, and Stephen Rea, in an atypical part, is even better. But Fiennes is becoming a bit of a cliché: the genteel, delicate British romantic lover, capable of outbursts of ever-so-sensitive passion before relapsing into his standard sensitive British dorkiness. **NR**

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WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR.

Were Fort Sumter's Guns Registered?

NEW YORK, JANUARY 14

THE quarrel over a Confederate flag flying over the statehouse of Columbia, South Carolina, continues to engage the public. Why? Those who feel that, emanating from that flag, is nostalgia for slavery can't make their case persuasively. Nobody in South Carolina believes in a return to slavery. What else is signified? The southern heritage, some answer: but heritage of what? The swastika is unmistakably the symbol of Hitler and Hitlerism. The heritage felt so strongly by defenders of the Stars and Bars has to do with the sense of a reserved right of the citizen to secede from the government. And that is profoundly relevant to current political controversy, specifically the quarrel over gun control.

The partisans are extraordinarily, not to say disgustingly, polarized. The Citizens of America is circulating a petition asking Congress to ordain a one-year limitation on the ownership of guns of any kind. During that year, the government would repay the citizen the value of his forfeited gun(s). After that, ownership would be criminal.

Now that proposal, even though it isn't going to fly in America, is an arguable position. But what is interesting in the literature of the Citizens of America is less the proposal than the accompanying rhetoric. "We're a single-issue organization," writes its director. "This campaign will not be apologetic, it will not play fair, it will hit below the belt whenever the opportunity presents itself, it will not take prisoners."

The other side too can express itself with abandon. One anti–gun-control organization's newsletter informs its readers: "I signed the petition three times, once as Adolf Hitler, once as Benito Mussolini, and once as Pol Pot." That organization goes on to publish a letter addressed to this columnist by John McClaughry, who is the president of the Ethan Allen Institute in Vermont, a libertarian, pro-gun organization named after the revolutionary hero who founded the Green Mountain Boys.

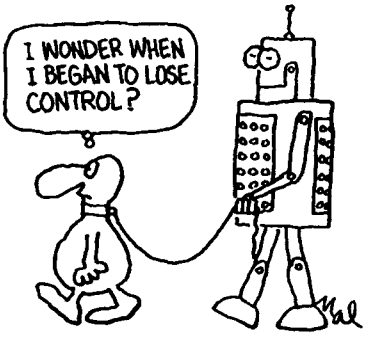
He wrote: "Am I correct that you are in favor of the government keeping a record of guns sold, and to whom? How reassuring to know that the next Craig Livingstone and Janet Reno will know what firearms are in my possession. In 1685 James II promulgated a ban on firearms ownership by the Irish. Is that where you are heading? Have you no memory, man?"

I pleaded that the government's primary responsibility is to protect the lives of its citizens. Therefore, the police need such aids as are useful in tracking down aggressors. These include fingerprints, Social Security numbers, passport numbers, and yes, gun-registration numbers. The balance between privacy and protection is always changing; see, e.g., airport procedures. I concluded: "The time to start shooting at the policeman is not when he is engaged in enforcing the law, but when he is engaged in tyrannical practices."

Mr. McClaughry's reply is that of opponents of proposed measures asking for full-scale gun registration. "Under present law, federal firearms licensees (gun dealers) are required to retain a form, showing to whom a firearm was sold. This form may be accessed by law-enforcement authorities seeking to establish the ownership path of a firearm *used in a crime*. The government is barred by law from accessing these gun-sale records *unless the gun was used in a crime*. The purpose of this provision is to prevent the government from being able to identify which citizens are armed."

This is Confederate-flag thinking. The thought behind it is that citizens need to keep their guns in hiding from the government. Why?

Because the day might come when the citizens will want to use those guns. Against whom? . . . Against individual aggressors? But obviously guns are kept, other than by sportsmen, for that contingent reason. What is the objection to the government's knowing that you have such a gun? There is reason to conceal ownership of a gun where it is illegal to own one. On the other hand—and here is where the gun-control people have made an insufficient case for further legislation—what are the motives of government in seeking information on who has a gun and what is its manufacturer's registration number?



Those who want to make the case for the registration of all weapons should demonstrate, if they can, how such records would have prevented numerable crimes, or identified numerable criminals who got away. Some of us grew up with guns—I myself own, I'd guess, seven or eight. They are a psychological comfort against marauders.

But some people's attitude towards them has got to trace to thinking of them as weapons against government tyranny. There is no other way to account for the high temperature of the principals.

Pull Down That Flag

NEW YORK, JANUARY 18

Q: Shouldn't your candidate have just said it out straight—that the Confederate flag should be pulled down in Columbia? After all, Gov. Bush is a citizen of a state that fought with the South during the Civil War, and there's no flag flying in Austin—

A: What's flying in Austin doesn't duplicate what flies in South Carolina. There are, besides, interesting cultural differences. South Carolina is where the Civil War began. Austin, Texas, is where Gov. Houston pleaded that Texas should stay neutral.

Q: But how much does yesterday's history have to do with the question of flying a flag of a movement, of a nation-manqué that was beaten in war 135 years ago?

A: The legislators who hoisted the Dixie flag weren't provoked by the memory of the war between the states, as southerners call the Civil War. It was the activist Supreme Court and the Congress. The South Carolinians were reacting in protest against the civil-rights activity that began with the *Brown* v. *Board of Education* decision in 1954, outlawing segregated schools. The flag was first hoisted in 1962. It is a reliquary of evanescent hopes and ideals.

Q: You've got to be kidding! Was slavery an ideal?

A: No. And modern scholarship is pretty secure in insisting that slavery was central to the southern way of life. But extruding slavery, there is for many southerners nostalgia and a sense of southern idealism and cultural particularism of the kind associated with the famous literary rallying point, *I'll Take My Stand*. There wasn't anything persuasively associated with pro-

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slavery in the works of Robert Penn Warren, Allen Tate, John Crowe Ransom, or Donald Davidson. They're all dead now, but it's not inconceivable they'd have voted to keep the flag up there.

Q: Even if your candidate, George W. Bush, takes the formal position that it's not his say whether the flag stays up or comes down—why doesn't he simply say that in his view it *should* come down, because it is offensive to so many people, as witness the big demonstration on Monday?

A: A governor of one state is reluctant to instruct the governor of another state what to do, where state protocols are the matter under discussion. Remember this, that to lower a flag is the most painful thing a proud people is ever called upon to do. When Gen. Lee removed his sword and proffered it to Gen. Grant at Appomattox, that was the military equivalent of lowering one's flag. It was thought so painful a gesture that Gen. Grant returned the sword as a matter of courtesy, conqueror to the conquered—

Q: You're not suggesting Gen. Grant would have permitted the Confederate flag to continue to fly over state capitols?

A: No, because after the war what was absolutely required was a sign of formal submission to the authority of Congress. Where rebel flags were furtively exposed, it was as stigmata of a lost cause. The elevation of the flag in South Carolina in 1962 was a gesture of philosophical defiance, and indeed more than that, when the doctrine of interposition was advanced by Sen. Richard Russell and others, in an effort to nullify, in the spirit of John C. Calhoun, the aggression of the Supreme Court . . .

Q: The political point of it has to be that there is a consensus forming, not only nationally, but also in South Carolina, that the flag has got to come down.

A: You make the political point. *Exactly*. Bringing down the flag is not the responsibility any South Carolina governor wants to take, nor any other governor to counsel him to take, especially not the governor of a state that once fought for the Confederacy. There is one clean solution—

Q: To delay the thing until after the primaries?

A:—That's an incidental benefit. But the call should go out for a plebiscite. Let everybody vote on whether that flag should continue in so prominent a position. Almost certainly it would be voted to come down. Among other things, there are economic boycotts getting into the picture, and the southern tradition is sensitive to material pressures. Jim Crow in eateries in Atlanta ended in part because of the heroism of civil-rights squatters, in major part because of the desire of merchants for supplementary black commerce.

Q: So you are telling me you will not advise Gov. Bush to go any further than he has done on this question?

A: That's a good way of putting it.

Helms in the Lions' Den

NEW YORK, JANUARY 21

IT was a rollicking day at the U.N. on Thursday. Amb. Richard Holbrooke is a superb impresario, polished, resourceful, witty. On a single day, he invites Sen. Jesse Helms to address the U.N. Security Council and also invites, to a small luncheon for Helms, representatives of China, and of Taiwan. The Taiwanese didn't turn up, depriving Mr. Holbrooke of a second history-making diplomatic event—the separated Chinese brethren have not shared a diplomatic table in the 51 years of their coexistence. But he scored with Sen. Helms, who is the first legislator in the history of the United Nations to address the Security Council.

And what an event that was. There are only 15 members of the Security Council, but there were 100 ambassadors crowding the scene to hear what would happen when so prominent a critic of much of the work of the U.N. entered the arena and faced the lions. The diplomats at the U.N. are a tough, proud, and sensitive breed. Their weapons are rhetoric, suasion, and votes. But Sen. Helms was armed with a billion dollars, and the lions behaved as lambs. And this notwithstanding that Sen. Helms did nothing that was out of character. He was just plain . . . Jesse Helms. "I am not a diplomat," he told the illustrious assembly, which included nobody who had any doubt on that matter. "I am an elected official with something of a reputation for saying what I mean."

He addressed immediately the sovereign question before the house, which is the accrued indebtedness of the United States government to the U.N. An embarrassing matter, actually. The U.S. doesn't have the reputation of a deadbeat, and doesn't court it. Mr. Helms, who had sponsored a bill that triggered about a billion dollars' reduction in our debt to the U.N., didn't specifically account for the fiscal delinquency. What he stressed was the continuing need for U.N. reforms—without specifying them—and also the reservations so many Americans have about expansive U.N. activity.

On the matter of our share of the overhead, Helms advised that the GAO had computed it all for him. The annual offering is $1.4 billion. But, said the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, "the American taxpayers also spend an additional EIGHT BILLION, SEVEN HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-NINE MILLION DOLLARS"—the capital letters are in the senator's text—in peacekeeping activity undertaken under U.N. auspices. The point Helms chose to stress was the zealous concern for the sovereignty of the United States. To begin with, "treaty obligations can be superseded by a simple act of Congress" (this is not quite the full story—treaties are the supreme law of the land). Moreover, the U.S. will yield to nobody "a monopoly on international moral legitimacy." The senator sprinkled his speech with memories of U.N. delinquencies, as when it failed to endorse our move against the Communists in Grenada and Nicaragua. And he warned that the United States would not submit to "concepts like the International Criminal Court." The U.N. is not at this moment asking for forfeitures of U.S. sovereignty, but the senator spoke one day after the court in Brussels advised British mothers that they could not spank recalcitrant children and a week after it told the British army that no provisions would be tolerated in respect of gays in the military.

The listeners were all but unanimous in their hospitable treatment of their guest. True, the Cuban ambassador complained that he had not been recognized to speak, but the adroit Mr. Holbrooke reminded him that Cuba is not at this moment a member of the Security Council, and therefore not entitled to speak. The Tunisian ambassador thanked the guest for his "very useful discussion with member states." The Argentine ambassador agreed on the need for reforms and thanked Sen. Helms "particularly for his candidness and sincerity in voicing his views."

Amb. Sergei Lavrov of Russia was then introduced. I sat between Mr. Lavrov and Mr. Holbrooke at the luncheon given for Sen. Helms after the U.N. proceedings, and the ambassador was very pleased to recall that he had genially advised Jesse Helms that he, Lavrov, *also* spoke with a southern accent—"both of us come from southern parts of our respective countries." In his speech, the Russian said that "other members of the United Nations expect from the United States a similar respect for their sovereignty, whether it be military, political, humanitarian, or commercial or economic." Leaving the assembly to wonder what exactly is meant by "humanitarian" sovereignty. But then words in the U.N. are often without very concrete meaning. The engagement of Jesse Helms in that chamber celebrated very plain talk.

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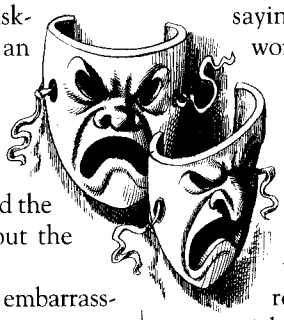
FLORENCE KING

THE trend spotters and opinion leaders have fallen down on the job. Here it is February already, and we haven't been sold on "post-Y2K syndrome."

No roundtables, no panels, no two-part specials, no cover stories, no man-in-the-street interviews, no 900-number polls, no lapel ribbons for empathizers—nothing. Just peace and quiet, give or take Alan Keyes, and people going about their business with nobody asking them if they're having an anti-climax.



Something is wrong. When in the course of current events have we been left alone like this? What is behind the strangely mature silence about the calamity that wasn't?

One explanation could be embarrassment, except that the media are incapable of embarrassment. Accuse them of indulging in much ado about nothing and they will simply preempt themselves and do a day's worth of breaking news called "More Ado About Nothing."

A post-Y2K syndrome would have dovetailed nicely with the traditional late-winter-blues syndrome, but this winter is different. Elián Gonzalez has washed up from foreign shores to become the *E pluribus unum* of "Our Children," making it possible for all Americans to obsess over the same kid at the same time. The thrill of having our favorite national neurosis coordinated with such precision makes the successful extermination of the Y2K bug seem as nothing.

It's a shame, really, that we don't feel let down and cheated, because the media-government complex worked so hard on Operation Friendly Panic. As the glitching hour approached, the news was full of sunny John Koskinen, chairman of the President's Council on Year 2000 Conversion, he of the smiling eyes, bald pate, and soothing manner that made the *Washington Times* dub him "the nation's grandfather."

Koskinen is a whole comfort zone unto himself, the balm in Gilead made flesh, the personification of kiss-it-and-make-it-well.

Indeed, Koskinen gave such a virtuoso performance that even the most trusting souls could not help wondering darkly, "How come they picked him?" The answer was easy: He looks exactly like our original designated grandfather, Dwight D. Eisenhower. Picking an Ike clone for a front man was tantamount to saying they were expecting the worst.

It was brilliant, but then they made a mistake.

Ever since the Y2K bug was first publicized a few years ago, the gurus had talked as if all we had to worry about was the actual rollover of the date at midnight on New Year's Eve, but in December they started issuing statements about what could happen on "Monday, January 3, the first workday," and speculating about kinks that could persist for "a few weeks," which soon turned into "a few months," not to mention (except they mentioned them) quarterly crises involving fiscal-year dates.

Then there was Leap Year. Nobody had ever before uttered a word about it as a computer problem, but the Boys of December identified February 29 as a glitch within a glitch, a mini-Y2K on the heels of the big one, when the computers might go crazy all over again. Finally, one consultant cautioned that some problems "may linger until 2001 and beyond."

Around Christmas, the news filled up with airports that looked like dog shows, warnings about packages from Frankfurt, and grim talk about our "porous" Canadian border, accompanied by shots of desolate Montana crossings with nothing but little concrete posts to indicate the line of demarcation between Dull and Duller. The apocalypse menu had expanded to include terrorism.

No wonder we didn't experience post-Y2K syndrome. The media-government complex made the mistake of forgetting Occam's Razor, the philosophical principle that states, "Hypotheses must not be developed beyond necessity." In other words, don't pile on; focus on one main point or else you will lose your audience.

Was Y2K a hoax? A Spanish business official thinks so. Salvador Bellido was quoted in the *Washington Times*: "We're beginning to think that all this has been set up for someone's benefit, I don't know if it was Bill Gates or who."

Much as I would like to blame Gates, he doesn't strike me as the type for a subconscious hoax, which is what I think Y2K was. Yes, computers needed fixing, but so did something else, so why not kill two birds with one stone?

As far back as I can remember, i.e., Pearl Harbor, every American disaster has inspired the sentiment, "It brought us together." Now that we could teach the Balkans a thing or two about Balkanization, maybe a band of goo-goo idealists in the media-government complex saw in Y2K what the flakier Transcendentalists saw in utopian communes and cooperative farms.

Guilty over Our Great Diversity's failure to realize its potential, maybe they began spinning visions of the "inclusion" that could be achieved if a cross-section of Americans found themselves up the same creek. Not that they consciously wanted a Y2K panic, or actively decided to help it along. It was just that they couldn't stop thinking about how it would bring us together—all those chips off the old mosaic taking turns digging cesspits and weeding the communal garden, their imagined differences dropping away as they shared their feelings, their dreams, and their Spam.

The false alarm did produce a post-Y2K syndrome, but it's not the one the media-government complex anticipated, and they are in no hurry to tussle with it. Known as "the boy who cried wolf," it poses a direct threat to another of their creations: the warning industry.

From now on, the nightly scares about insidious apples, death-dealing Alfredo sauce, and cancer of the navel will, with luck, fall on the deaf ears of sneering cynics and seize-the-day blithe spirits, until the health nazis sicken and die and Joe Camel is the Comeback Kid. **NR**

Miss King can be reached at P. O. Box 7113, Fredericksburg, Va. 22404.

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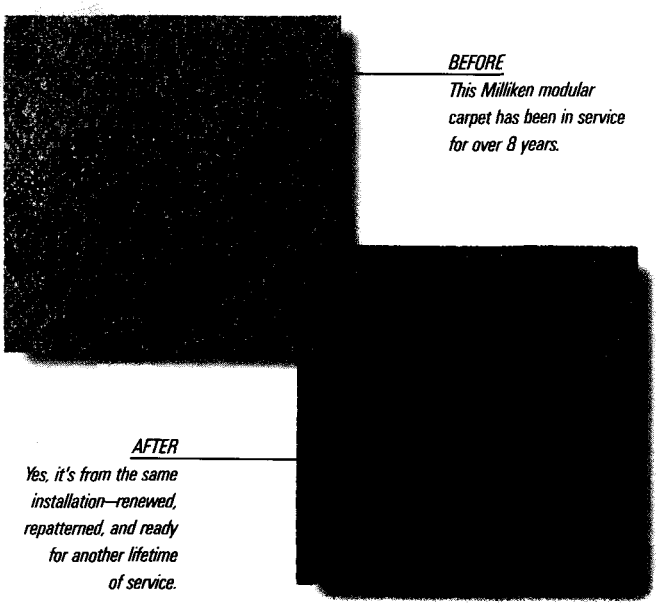

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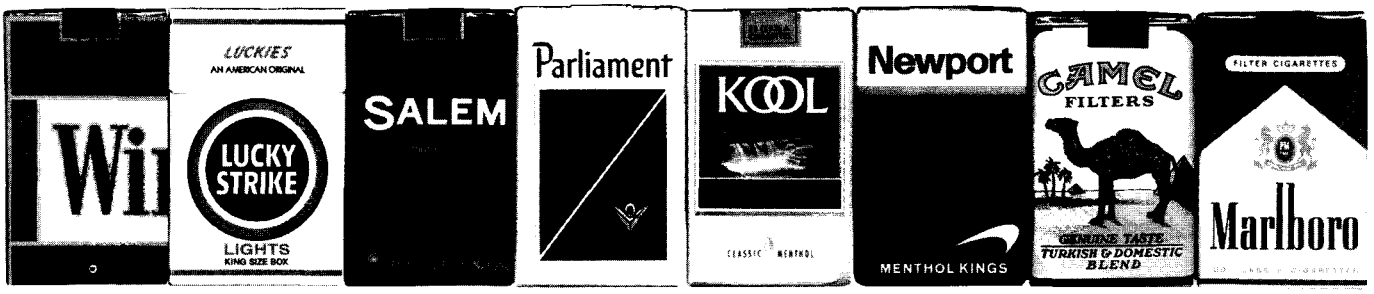

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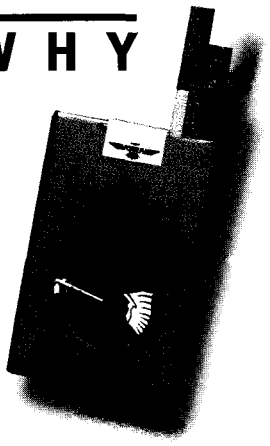

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